

# Rolling Stone



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**40<sup>th</sup>**  
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## Saturday Night Live

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ALL 141  
CAST  
MEMBERS**

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DAVIES  
**MY LIFE  
IN 15  
SONGS**

TREY  
ANASTASIO  
**ON THE DEAD  
REUNION**

FATHER  
JOHN  
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Issue 1229  
February 26, 2015  
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# RS1229 "All the NEWS THAT FITS"



Chevy Chase, Dan Aykroyd, John Belushi and Lorne Michaels (from left) in 1975. Page 30

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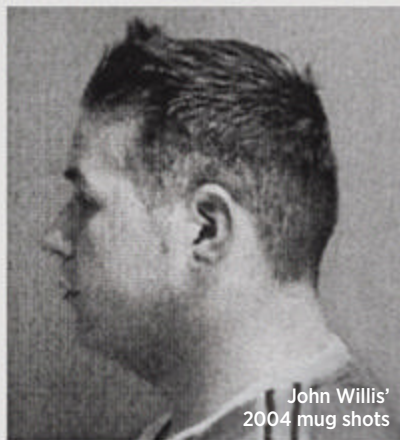
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John Willis' 2004 mug shots

## CRIME

# RISE OF A CRIMINAL OVERLORD: THE 'WHITE DEVIL' OF BOSTON

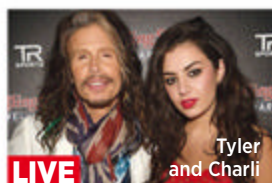
How did a homeless kid from Boston transform himself into "White Devil John," a major kingpin in the criminal underworld of the city's Chinatown? Check out our in-depth investigative feature by David Kushner.



## FILM

## WILLIE TALKS: TRIGGER & ME

In the first entry of our new "Mastering the Craft" series, Willie Nelson tells the story of Trigger, the beat-up Martin N-20 guitar he's been playing for more than 45 years.



## LIVE

## STEVEN TYLER: SUPERPARTY

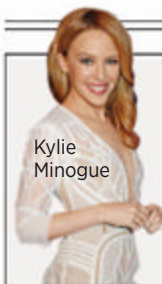
The night before the Patriots' big victory, Tyler and Charli XCX hit the stage at ROLLING STONE and Miller Lite's Live in Arizona party. Check out photos from the event.



## REVIEW

## 'SHADES': AN EXPERT TAKE

*Fifty Shades of Grey* has the whole world talking about BDSM sex – but how authentic is it? We took a real-life dominatrix with us to the movie to find out.



Kylie Minogue

## MUSIC NEWS, AROUND THE CLOCK

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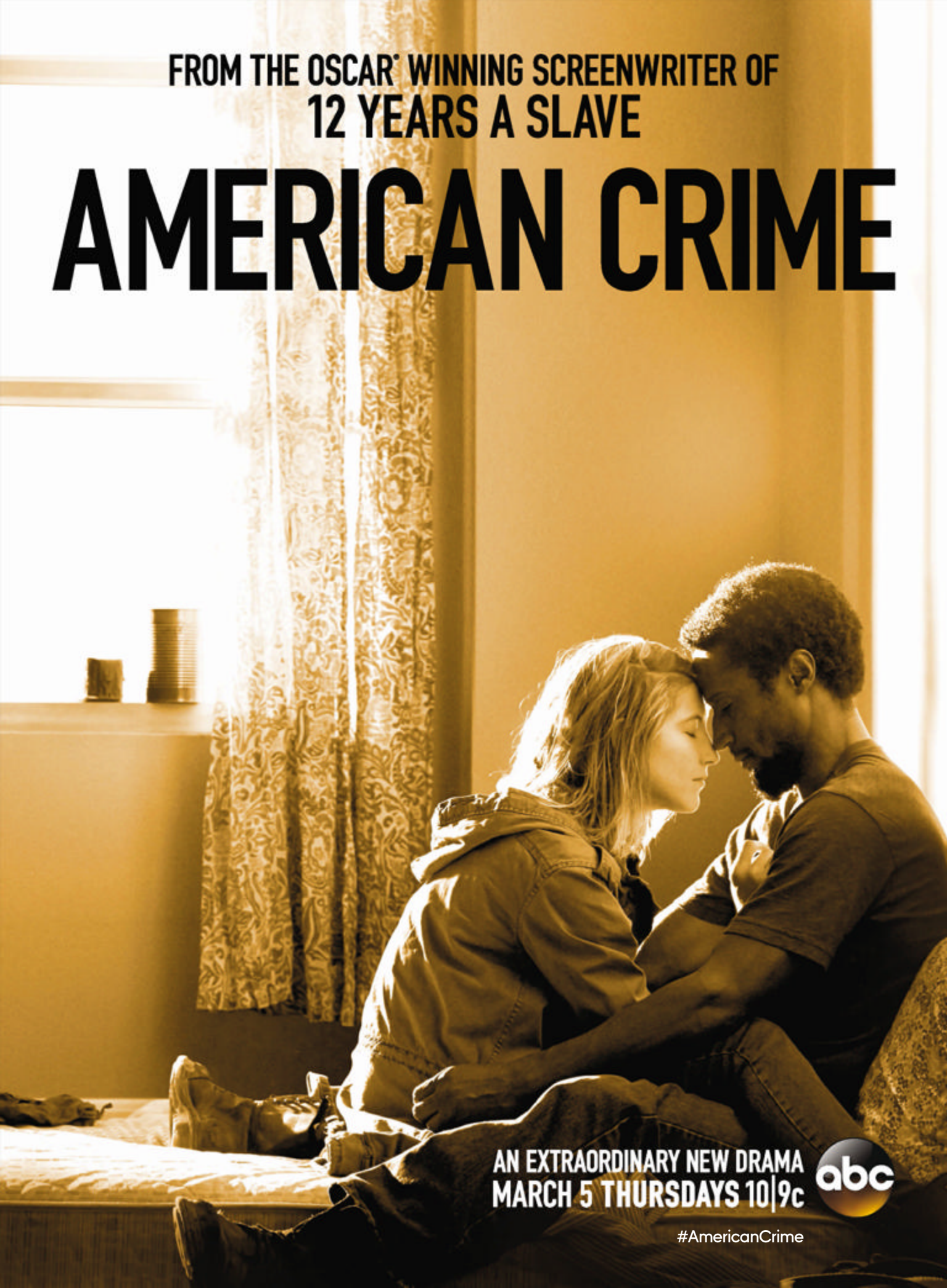


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# AMERICAN CRIME



AN EXTRAORDINARY NEW DRAMA  
MARCH 5 THURSDAYS 10|9c



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# CORRESPONDENCE

LOVE LETTERS  
& ADVICE



## Gold Dust Queen

I JUST FINISHED BRIAN HIATT's extraordinary cover story on Stevie Nicks ["Magic & Loss," RS 1227], and I feel I really know her now. I say that as someone who fell in love with *Bella Donna* at the age of 12. I've read, seen and heard countless interviews with Stevie, but I found this one particularly revealing in the most beautiful ways.

*Jennifer London, Nashville*

I APPLAUD YOU ON A WONDERFUL issue and on the Peggy Sirota photographs of Stevie Nicks. My heart jumped out of my chest when I saw them.

*Jacquelyn Sandifer, St. Louis*

THANKS FOR PUTTING THE queen of rock & roll where she belongs. Her honest lyrics, intelligence, and tenacity in the face of adversity and ridicule have made her a powerful example for women.

*Marisa Lisette  
Burbank, CA*

THERE ARE FEW PROFILE writers like Brian Hiatt. He hit this one right out of the park.

*Jordan Brown, via the Internet*

## A Dark Web

DAVID KUSHNER'S STORY about Cicada ["The Web's Deepest Mystery," RS 1227] was a truly fascinating read. Whoever is behind this has cooked up one

## Divestment Takes Off

In RS 1227, contributing editor Tim Dickinson reported on the rise of the fossil-fuel-divestment movement ["The Logic of Divestment"], as some of the country's biggest foundations, including the Rockefeller Brothers Fund, shed their fossil-fuel stocks and move their millions elsewhere. ROLLING STONE readers wrote in to comment.

TIM DICKINSON'S ARTICLE on carbon divestment was lively, coherent and persuasive – an incredibly well-written story. Who could have imagined that we'd one day be able to turn to ROLLING STONE for investment advice?

*Marcia V. Stucki, Galesburg, MI*

THE RS STORY ON DIVESTMENT misses the big picture. When people adopt a more sensible approach to energy and clean energy by not buying gas-guzzling vehicles and huge energy-wasting houses, then divestment will automatically follow. So stop blaming people you dislike for supplying unhealthy products that Americans (unfortunately) gobble up.

*Tom Beninate, Toms River, NJ*

DICKINSON HAS THE IMPOSSIBLE task of finding the logic of the divestment movement. Unlike in the Eighties, there's no clear "ask" here – divest until what? Back then, it was simple: We divest until you cease business in apartheid South Africa. Now the ask should be: We divest until the country enacts policies that don't favor fossil fuels. We have to lay

the policy groundwork for a smooth, market-driven transition. That's where divestment can help.

*Jonathan Becker  
Piedmont, CA*

LET'S GET INTELLECTUALLY honest and admit that divestment doesn't work. At a minimum, we need a carbon fee, which is the real policy that will reduce emissions and keep more fossil fuels in the ground.

*Sage Radachows  
Via the Internet*



THERE IS NO POLLUTION. Or climate change or global warming. Right-wing talk radio says it all the time, so it must be true.

*M. Bartha, via the Internet*

## Bawdy Broads

RAUNCHY AND REAL, COMEDY Central's *Broad City* is what *Girls* can only dream of being ["The Other Girls," RS 1227]. It's fitting that Jonah Weiner's nice feature on the show ran almost back-to-back with a piece

about Lena Dunham's emotionally stalled one. It's Abbi Jacobson and Ilana Glazer who are the real New Yorkers.

*Elizabeth Braverman  
Via the Internet*

## Comeback Kid

I WAS NEVER A BIG JONAS Brothers fan, but I'm now a serious fan of Nick Jonas [Q&A, RS 1227]. Jonas' good humor about his place in the bubblegum pantheon and his grace about growing up Disney are genuine. Not sure why he had to strip to achieve adulthood, but I'm glad he's on the charts again.

*Mayce Mitchell, via the Internet*

## 'Selma' Snubbed

HERE'S TO THE ARRIVAL of a brilliant director ["Ava DuVernay's Road to *Selma*," RS 1227]. I loved DuVernay's observation about silence in film being radical. How was she not nominated for an Academy Award?

*Paul C. Evans, via the Internet*

## Joe Cocker, R.I.P.

YOUR SWEET TRIBUTE TO Joe Cocker took me back to 1970, when I met Cocker after a Mad Dogs & Englishmen concert in Santa Monica [Tributes, RS 1227]. I've met a lot of famous people, but none as kind as he. Thanks for reminding us how often huge talent includes huge struggle. Rock & roll greatness and rock & roll excess often go hand in hand.

*Lufton Wright  
Ventura, CA*

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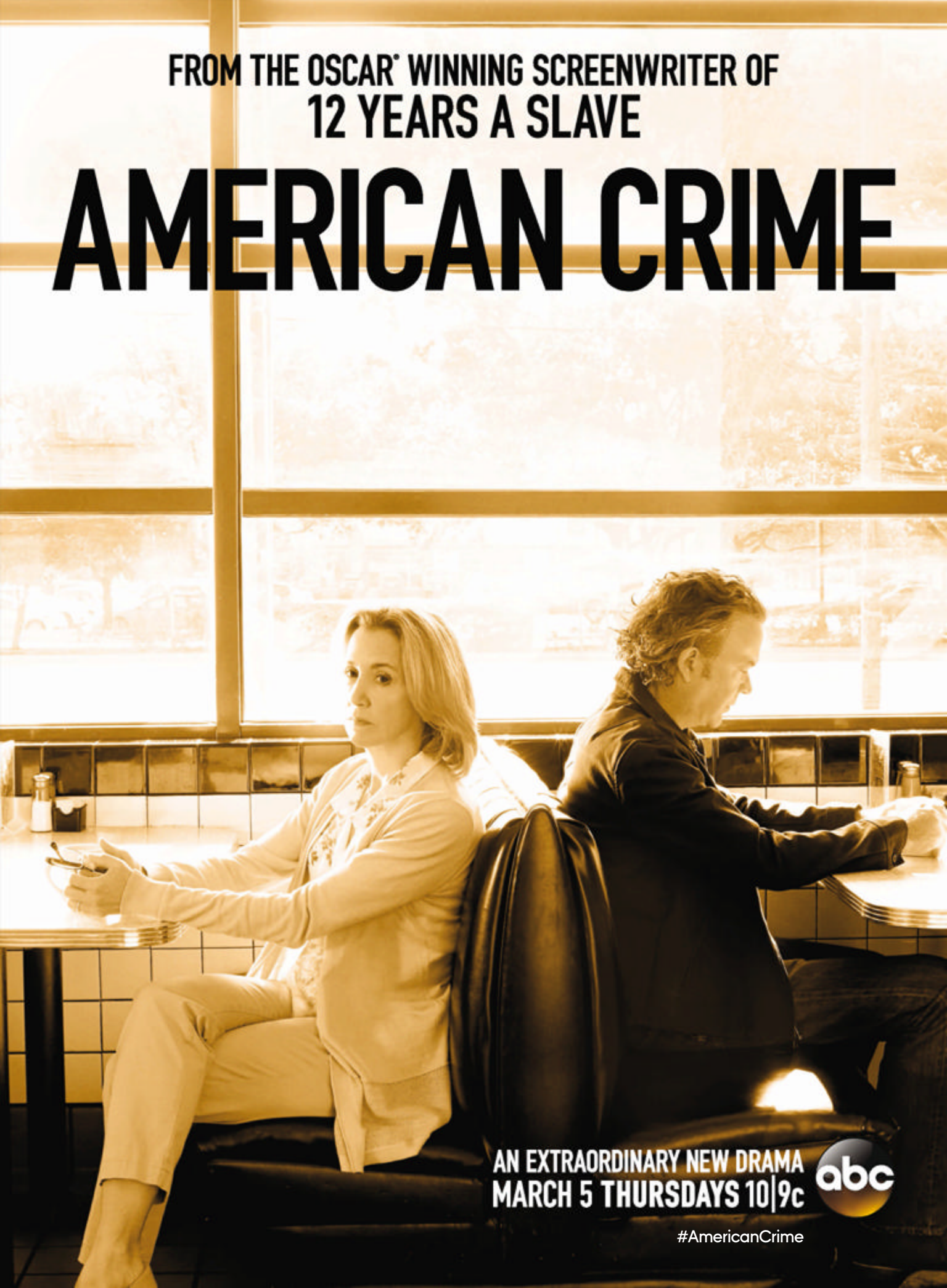
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# THE PLAYLIST

OUR FAVORITE SONGS, ALBUMS AND VIDEOS RIGHT NOW



## 1. Rihanna, Kanye West and Paul McCartney "FourFiveSeconds" video

This year's greatest mini-supergroup makes a black-and-white clip to match its simple, soulful single: Ri and Ye emote in denim, and Paul strums an acoustic guitar. It could *almost* be a lost scene from *A Hard Day's Night*.

## 2. Steve Earle and the Dukes

### "Baby Baby Baby (Baby)"

"I got a girl that live way down South/A little town they call 'Shut My Mouth,'" the roots-rock hero sings on this hunk of Chess Records blues guitar, rough-edged vocals and chicken-grease bass, from his new *Terraplane*.



## 3. Young Thug "Speed Racer" ◀

Future-freak beat from rising Atlanta producer Metro Boomin, molten-lava-hot flows and nonsensically catchy lyrics – this track is exactly why Young Thug is the most exciting voice in rap right now.

## 4. Courtney Barnett

### "Pedestrian at Best" video

On the first single from her upcoming LP, the Aussie songwriter skewers music-biz phonies ("Gimme all your money and I'll make some origami, honey/I think you're a joke, but I don't find you very funny!") over caustic *Nevermind* guitars. The video, where Barnett plays a depressed clown, is even more hilarious.



## 5. Colleen Green

### "Pay Attention"

If this perfect pop-punk sugar rush had been released in 1995, it would have been on MTV nonstop. Any fan of early Weezer is sure to love it.



## 6. Torres "Strange Hellos"

This rising singer-songwriter's latest tune starts as a quietly seething ballad – then she torches it into a furious grungy rocker. We can't wait for her new LP, *Sprinter* (due out in May).



## EXPERT OPINION



## Common

We asked the rapper-actor – who's up for an Oscar for *Selma*'s "Glory" – to tell us what he thought of five tunes.

### OLD

#### Curtis Mayfield

#### "We the People Who Are Darker Than Blue"

Man, this song hits me in a deep place. It comes from the voice of the struggle. Curtis was trying to tell black people that we're all the same.

#### Do or Die

#### "Po Pimp"

This is a Chicago classic. Anytime I hear it, it reminds me of where I come from. It came out in the Nineties, but we were living in the Seventies.

### NEW

#### D'Angelo

#### "The Charade"

I really love this song. "All we wanted was a chance to talk/'Stead, we only got outlined in chalk." It's revolutionary. You feel the deep pain in it.

#### Lupe Fiasco

#### "Deliver"

Lupe is one of the dopest MCs around town. He knows the ghetto, but he's going to show you another side of the ghetto. And he can hop on any style of beat.

#### DeJ Loaf

#### "Try Me"

She's a unique voice from Detroit. I like the rawness – and I like when she says, "Rock that all-white when I'm feelin' godly." That shows she has depth.



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# Rolling Stone

## GRATEFUL PHISH

Weir, Anastasio and Lesh (from left) in Virginia, September 2013

## Inside the Dead's Final Ride

Trey Anastasio on the Grateful Dead's historic reunion shows this summer. By David Fricke

ON JANUARY 5TH, JUST AFTER HIS band Phish ended a four-night run of shows in Miami, singer-guitarist Trey Anastasio received an e-mail from Phil Lesh, the former bassist of the Grateful Dead. Lesh asked Anastasio to join him and the other surviving members of his band – guitarist Bob Weir and drummers Bill Kreutzmann and Mickey Hart – onstage for reunion concerts this summer marking the Dead's 50th birthday and the 20th anniversary of the [Cont. on 12]



## GRATEFUL DEAD

[Cont. from 11] passing of founding guitarist Jerry Garcia. Anastasio recalls his immediate reaction: "It was a thrill and an honor." Still, he adds, "I thought about it for a minute, tried to think about the implications." Then he said yes.

"Phil said all four of them thought it was the right thing," Anastasio says of the shows, to be held at Soldier Field in Chicago on July 3rd, 4th and 5th. Garcia last performed with the Dead at that 61,500-seat stadium, on July 9th, 1995; he died a month later, on August 9th at 53, of a heart attack. Anastasio notes that Lesh, in his message, "talked about the healthy relationships between the band members," that the reunion "was going to be a real positive experience. And Phil said, 'This is the last time I'm doing this.' He seemed pretty definitive about that."

The Dead's July run – dubbed "Fare Thee Well" and featuring keyboard players Bruce Hornsby, who played with the Dead in the Nineties, and longtime Weir and Lesh sideman Jeff Chimenti – is on track to become the biggest single-act concert event of the year, and possibly the largest ever. Two weeks after the shows were announced, ticket requests via presale mail order totaled more than 400,000, well past capacity. Peter Shapiro, the New York-based promoter and entrepreneur who conceived the shows, says he and co-producers Madison House Presents are "looking at going 360" – opening up the seating behind the stage – and "going general admission" on the field "to accommodate more people and have more of a vibe."

Shapiro estimates the cost of producing "Fare Thee Well" – and potential revenue – in "the multiple millions of dollars. But with this response, we can put on a show that takes the spirit of the Grateful Dead, what they were doing production-wise, and push it to the highest level." He promises vintage touches such as a tapers' section, specially printed commemorative tickets and "a safe, energetic lot scene." The demand for tickets ensures that "not everyone is going to get in," Shapiro warns. So he is working on simulcasting the shows around the country; Shapiro is already holding the dates at his venues, including the Capitol Theatre in Port Chester, New York, and the Brooklyn Bowl.

The road to "Fare Thee Well" began in early 2014, when Shapiro made his

first proposal to Weir, Lesh, Hart and Kreutzmann, based on returning to the site of their last concert with Garcia. The four received other offers from Live Nation and the producers of the Coachella and Bonnaroo festivals for 50th-birthday performances. (The Dead played their first show, as the Warlocks, in May 1965.) But Shapiro, 42, had special qualifications. He "grew up on Dead tours," as he puts it; ran Wetlands, the New York jam-scene club, from 1996 to 2001; and since then has

songs and analyzing the melodic purpose in Garcia's soloing and the musical genealogy inside his most iconic licks. "A couple of days ago, I started listening to 'The Wheel' [a Dead-show standard from Garcia's 1972 solo album, *Garcia*]. There's a line he plays after the first verse – it slides all the way from the bottom of the neck to the top. I learned it exactly, note for note. Then what I do, since I don't want to go out there and just copy Jerry – I play it in all 12 keys, so that I get it into my body.

"The thing is, there is a lot more intent in those lines than people might think," adds Anastasio. "It was not just noodling. Based on the number of ideas Jerry had in any one-minute period, he was very much a musician first, a guitar player second. The music was coming out, and the guitar was a vehicle, a transparent filter." Garcia has also been, for Anastasio, a historical guide. Working through Garcia's "country-vernacular" playing in a Seventies version of "I Know You Rider" led Anastasio to a new passion. "All of a sudden," he says, "I found myself listening to Buck Owens, this Bakersfield-country sound," and particularly Owens' legendary lead guitarist, Don Rich. "That's what I've been doing, listening to Don Rich to get to Jerry."

Anastasio and Weir have traded lists of Dead songs – 60 apiece – that each would like to play. They will meet "in a couple of weeks," Anastasio says, to "play a few things

together and connect." The full band will "rehearse in June a little bit." Anastasio expects the singing to be largely shared by Weir, Hornsby, himself and the audience. "People have such lifelong relationships to these songs," Anastasio says.

Then, a week after the Chicago shows, Anastasio will be back on the road with Phish. Asked if he is putting a lot of work and heart into an experience that will last only three days, Anastasio replies firmly, "No. To me, it's a labor of love. I'm learning so much. I kind of went away from this [in 1984]. Now I'm coming back to it, a little bit older, and rediscovering some great little gems.

"I'm providing a service," Anastasio says of his role in what is likely to be the final live Grateful Dead reunion. "The cool thing is it got me back inside the guitar. I thank them. And I thank Jerry."



**"I'm providing a service," Anastasio says of his role in what is likely the final Dead reunion. "The cool thing is it got me back inside the guitar. I thank them. And I thank Jerry."**



promoted many shows with the ex-members, particularly Lesh. "I believe in it," says Shapiro. "I'm a fan. I want to see it."

Anastasio's history with the Grateful Dead goes back to his first show, at the Hartford Civic Center in Connecticut in 1980. The guitarist regularly attended Dead gigs through 1984, when he began to focus on the launch of Phish. In 1999, he performed with Lesh in San Francisco at the bassist's first concerts after his 1998 liver transplant. Anastasio has also played with Weir and Kreutzmann. "The flow of the whole thing," Anastasio claims, "is in my DNA." Yet, he admits, "I never sat down and studied what Jerry played until the last two weeks.

"It's really been unbelievable," he says, taking a break on a recent morning from his now-daily regimen of practicing Dead



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EXCLUSIVE

# Why Nate Ruess Is Putting fun. on Ice

The singer is taking time off from the platinum-selling band to make a solo album

**L**AST SPRING, NATE RUESS WAS in a New York studio, recording a demo of "Nothing Without Love," a song meant for the next fun. album. In recent months, he had started dating fashion designer Charlotte Ronson and generally enjoyed getting away from the grind of fronting a multi-platinum rock band. At a loss for lyrics, he started singing about his newfound happiness. Suddenly, the song clicked. "It felt so believable – I was saying what I was thinking," Ruess says.

"Nothing Without Love," it turns out, won't be on the next fun. record, because, for the time being, there is no next fun. record. The band – whose last album, 2012's *Some Nights*, sold more than a million copies, spawned three hit singles and earned the group two Grammys – is on hiatus, with no plans at the moment to record or tour. (The band did say in a Facebook post that it was not breaking up.)

Instead, Ruess is making a solo record. The singer cites his relationship with Ronson – and the contentment that came with it – as the catalyst for his decision. "I'm

making a solo album because it's the first time I've been comfortable in my own skin, and it's with someone who's comfortable in their own skin," he says.

Instead of bringing his new songs to bandmates Jack Antonoff and Andrew Dost, Ruess decided to keep them for himself, realizing he wasn't willing to compromise. "You get a little selfish about songs you write, and it's hard to do that in a group setting," Ruess says.

Ruess told Antonoff and Dost of his decision late last summer. "It was a sloppy, long [conversation], kind of 'Guys, I've got something that I really want to do, and I need the opportunity to do that,'" he says.

Ruess says relationships within the band never soured, and that the success of Antonoff's Bleachers project was not a factor. "Fuck, no," he spits.

Ruess' still-untitled solo album (tentatively due out this summer) is brimming with fun.-size anthems – "Nothing Without Love" among them – as well as quiet ruminations like "Take It Back," a somber ballad featuring a guitar solo courtesy of Wilco's Jeff Tweedy. Ruess refuses to say that fun. are finished, but for now, he is focusing on himself: "People thought I was fucking nuts to do this, but I'm not out to chase something. I'm out to be happy."

JAMES MONTGOMERY

## THE WORD OF BOB

### DYLAN'S AARP CHAT: SIX GEMS

To promote *Shadows in the Night*, his collection of 10 standards associated with Frank Sinatra, Bob Dylan granted his first interview since his 2012 *ROLLING STONE* cover story – to *AARP the Magazine*. Here are some highlights from former RS managing editor Bob Love's 9,000-word Q&A.

**Dylan thinks there was a conspiracy to destroy early rock & roll.**

"When they finally recognized what it was, they had to dismantle it, which they did, starting with payola scandals and things like that," Dylan said.

**He went to an Elton John show and the crowd weirded him out.**

"There must have been at least three generations of people there. But they were all the same. Even the little kids. They looked just like their grandparents. It was strange."

**He attended a few Billy Graham rallies in the 1950s and 1960s.**

"This guy was like rock & roll personified – volatile, explosive. He had the hair, the tone, the elocution – when he spoke, he brought the storm down."

**Don't ask him if he thinks covering Frank Sinatra standards is "risky."**

"Like walking across a field laced with land mines? Or working in a poison-gas factory? There's nothing risky about making records. Comparing me with Frank Sinatra? You must be joking."

**He doesn't think that government creates jobs.**

"These big billionaires are the ones who can do it. We see... people who have nothing to do but meander around, turning to drink and drugs, into killers and jailbirds. They could all have work created for them by all these hotshot billionaires."

**He didn't like Rod Stewart's *Great American Songbook* series.**

"I thought if anybody could bring something different to these songs, Rod certainly could. I'm not going to knock anybody's right to make a living, but you can always tell if somebody's heart and soul is into something, and I didn't think Rod was into it in that way."

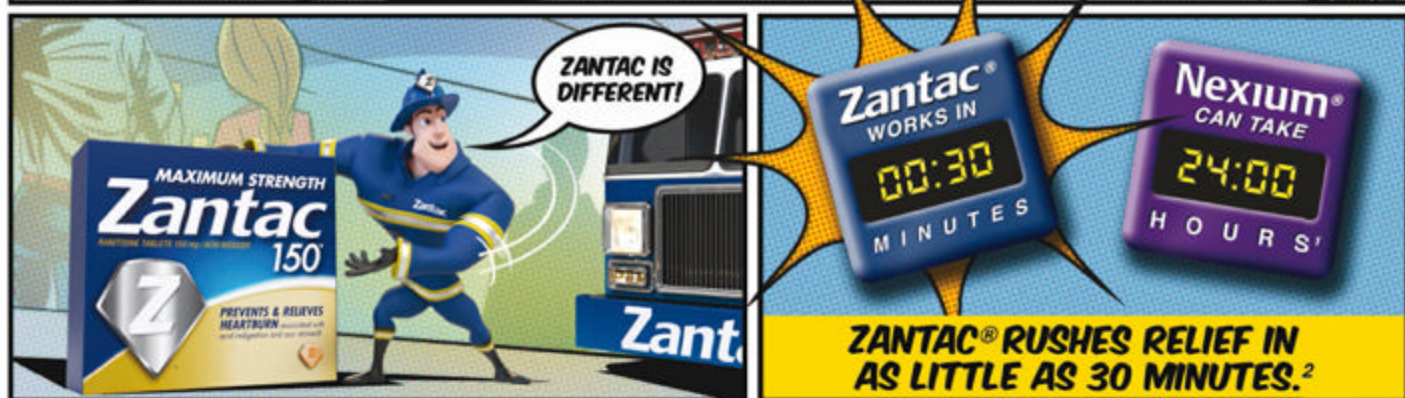
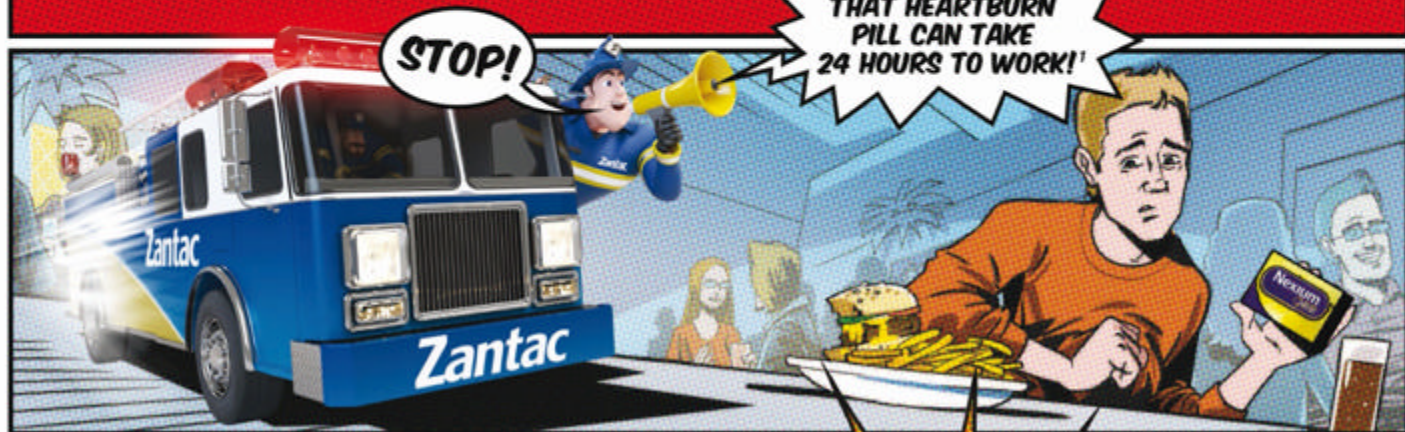
ANDY GREENE



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## ENCOUNTER

# Danny DeVito

The long view on sex, drugs and family from a national treasure

By Erik Hedegaard

OUTSIDE HIS MALIBU BEACH house, all snugly in the early-afternoon sun, belly protruding from a half-unbuttoned shirt, balding scalp protected by a ball cap, feet not even coming close to touching the end of the chaise longue upon which he rests, Danny DeVito is working his way through one cup of coffee, preparatory to having another one, and maybe even a third. This is the way he is. This is the way he's always been. "I have appetites," he says. Then he says, "Let's juice it up, man," and promptly slurps the top off of how he takes it, black and gut-twisting strong. After that, he lays back and talks. He likes to talk. About himself, mostly. But he knows this and is unapologetic, which is just one of his many charms and makes it all fine.

"I have such a good life," he's saying now. "I may be worried about, you know, are my feet dry? Should I put some more cream on my legs? This is, like, my big problem. So, yeah, I am self-centered. It's like, 'Here I am!' Me, me, me, me, me, basically – bullshit, bullshit, bullshit. I was coming down the street the other day and saw a possum. Who the fuck cares about it? I want to tell you what happened to me!"

He's 70 years old. Fifty-one years ago, he left the family home in Asbury Park, New Jersey, to move to New York and become an actor, much to the amusement of his friends, who took one last look at their buddy – then, as now, he stands only five-foot-zero-zilch-bupkis tall – and said, "Fuck, Dan, who do you think you are, Gregory Peck, Clark Gable? Look at yourself. You stupid bastard, you fucking moron, you jerk-off!"

The way things worked out, his size turned out to be a blessing, not a curse. First as crabby, sleazy, foulmouthed butterball Louie De Palma, Sunshine Cab Co.'s gnomish dispatcher in the glorious sitcom *Taxi* (1978-1983); then as [Cont. on 18]







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## DANNY DEVITO

[Cont. from 16] any number of truculent, bombastic, conniving and menace-minded characters in movies like *Romancing the Stone* (1984), *Throw Momma From the Train* (1987), *Batman Returns* (1992) and *Get Shorty* (1995); and most recently, since 2006, as nasty, duplicitous, daughter-waterboarding, tighty-whitie-displaying, totally depraved and amoral half-pint father figure Frank Reynolds, in FX's *It's Always Sunny in Philadelphia*, now in its 10th cult-favorite season, which correct-

there's how he says the nuns at Our Lady of Mt. Carmel dealt with universal adolescent urges. "Masturbation? That doesn't exist. We never heard the word 'sperm,' or about a clitoris or about ejaculation. It was all secret." He went on his first date at nine years old, maybe eight, to a movie at the St. James Theatre in Asbury Park. Their moms dropped them off. They went inside, they held hands, and then he kissed her. "There was no tongue involved," he says, "but it was a kiss."

And how old was he when he lost the, you know, deal?

school. It was 1958. He's always said he did this because heroin had recently arrived in Asbury Park. Not that he didn't like drugs, stolen pharmaceutical-grade uppers and downers especially, but his friends were gung-ho for "the horse," as he calls it, and he worried he might dabble. But that's not the only reason he wanted to leave.

"My father had a drinking problem and was sick in that way," he says, over a bag of chips, a deli-meat sandwich and a Diet Coke. "It's why I constantly look around to make sure everything is all right. When I was a kid, family-wise, you always want everything to be smooth and easy. Calm. And my father was a sweet man during the day. But as soon as he had a drink, he went off the deep end. I felt vulnerable. And so, yeah, get out of the house."

He angles his body sideways, his neck disappearing into his torso. The round moon of his face is a fascinating thing. Sometimes, it looks a little weary, like a shoeless hobo's. Most of the time, though, it's all lit up, like a cheerful fire is ablaze. He reaches for his coffee. It seems like as good a time as any to ask about his marriage. He and Perlman, with whom he has three grown children, had that brief separation in 2013, about which he has barely uttered a word in public. It makes you wonder, though, what kind of trouble he most often gets into with her?

His eyes turn to coal. "You can't go there," he says flatly, his tone returning to its Jersey roots. "Anything that's got to do with men and women, I don't know nothing." He goes on, "Got married 'cause my mother was still around. Gonna have kids. Italians. Got married. Had a great time, 31, 32 years. Ain't easy, is it? We had a lot of fun. Still have fun. But it's all about the kids, man. That's what happens."

He looks off, past the dunes rising toward the sea. Unfortunate that he had to, but he seems to have learned the lesson well: Family-wise, you always want everything to be smooth and easy.

After graduating from high school, he stuck it out at home, with no idea what to do next. Eventually, he became a hairdresser at his sister Angela's salon - where he was known as Mr. D and loved the job, mainly because he was surrounded by women. In 1964, he decided to study makeup at the American Academy of Dramatic Arts in Manhattan, where he took an acting class and realized that was the life for him. One of his roommates in New York was Michael Douglas, who gave DeVito his first big break, hiring him to play a mental patient in *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest*, which got him set up in Hollywood. When *Taxi* came along in 1978, his friends said, "Television?! You're crazy to do that!" Then, 27 years later, after starring in movies with



JERSEY BOY DeVito on the boardwalk in Asbury Park in 1987

ly promotes the show as being like "*Seinfeld* on crack."

In the process, he's become something of a national treasure, beloved by all, frowned upon by none. Even when he showed up drunk on *The View* in 2006, calling George Bush a "numbnuts" and blabbing on about having sex with wife-of-33-years Rhea Perlman in the Lincoln Bedroom at the White House, the ladies in charge couldn't have been more tickled. And, in 2013, not even the hardcore gossip rags could bring themselves to delve too deeply into DeVito's five-month separation from Perlman (herself a national treasure, for her role as Carla on *Cheers*).

The most important thing to know about DeVito is that as a kid growing up on the Jersey Shore in the 1950s, he was not bullied because of his height, he was not teased, he was not shunned. There was none of that. Then again, when it came to girls, he did have certain issues. For one, while slow-dancing at a mixer, his big fear was that his nose would end up pressed against his partner's cleavage, causing certain levels of discomfort. Then

He leans forward. "See, here's the thing about losing the deal. What it's really about is having an ejaculation while you're with somebody. That's what you're looking for. Coming in your pants, right? So the first time that happened? Ten, 11."

Come on!

He nods that big head of his, very vigorously. "Eleven, around there. Like, I found out about it at nine, 10, and got to rub up against someone at 10, 11."

But, see, that's DeVito in a nutshell. He defies all expectations and has been doing so for a very long time.

"I DIDN'T WANT HIM, BUT I'M SO PROUD of him," his mom, Julia, once said. She was 40 when he was born, with two teenage daughters already in the house. They were a working-class family. His father, Daniel Sr., went from owning a sweet shop to a dry-cleaning business (named Dan Dee Cleaners, naturally) and finally to a pool hall, where he put his son to work replacing the tips on cues.

At the age of 14, DeVito persuaded his father to send him away to boarding



# Margaret Cho: Sex and the Stand-Up Girl

Comedian leads a hilarious sexual-education class in her new late-night TV series

MARGARET CHO HAS DETAILLED every second of her first colonic onstage, and performed a rap extolling the virtues of her vagina, so her latest venture – a hilarious TLC talk show called *All About Sex*, where she spars with an expert panel on matters both anatomical and emotional – is a logical next step. ROLLING STONE checked in with Cho about the show, her comedic idol and her controversial Golden Globes appearance last month.

*Is it weird nobody's paid you expressly to talk about sex before?*

I always wanted to do a talk show about sex in a very frank manner that had an educational bent. It's sort of like conversations you would have with your older sister, or the school slut.

*Your next stand-up special is about combating violence against women.*

Hundreds of Nigerian schoolgirls were kidnapped by Boko Haram. I want to put together a pissed-off group of angry women who will go over there. We'll get Oprah to charter a plane.

*Who would you recruit?*

Michelle Rodriguez, Judge Judy, Courtney Love – you know she cannot wait to behead someone. And our secret

weapon: Solange. We need to all get on the same menstrual cycle, then go the week before we get our period and tear them up.

*What did you think of the backlash to your impression of a North Korean general at the Golden Globes?*

People were very offended, but most of them were not Asian. Why is it not OK for me to do impressions of people who are pretty much family members? I have North Korean relatives, so it seems like I'm the only one who can do it without being put in a labor camp.

*Do you have a favorite memory of your mentor Joan Rivers?*

She used to remind me and Sarah Silverman and Kathy Griffin that we should be grateful for what we had. She'd say, "We were the ugly ones in high school," and I was like, "Speak for yourself, you fucking bitch."

CARYN GANZ



FASHION

## CLOTHES THAT THWART YOUR CAMERA PHONE

How one DJ is fighting back against photo-snapping concertgoers

Chris Holmes wants you to stop taking so many damn photos at concerts. "I was DJ'ing with Thom Yorke at the Roosevelt Hotel, and everybody was standing in front of him just staring into their cameras," says Holmes, a DJ who tours as Paul McCartney's opening act. "That was the genesis of this thing." "This thing" is Flashback, a line of reflective clothes designed to thwart smartphone cameras via sensory overload: Snap a photo of somebody in Flashback and you get a ghostly, washed-out image. An avowed science geek, Holmes used a fabric containing tiny, light-reflecting glass beads, partnering with Beta-brand, a San Francisco-based crowd-funded company. Flashback pieces, including a suit, scarf and hoodie, just hit the market, ranging in price from \$40 to \$1,000. A few DJs have tried out Flashback prototypes, and Holmes has high hopes for the product. "When people see it light up their photos," he says, "it will hopefully remind them to put down their cameras and start dancing."

COCO MCPHERSON

## DANNY DEVITO

some of the era's biggest names (Arnold Schwarzenegger, John Travolta) and producing any number of epochal hits (*Erin Brockovich*, *Pulp Fiction*), along came *It's Always Sunny in Philadelphia*. This time, his friends said, "What are you going to do this for? It'll be a blip on the radar!" As usual, he did not listen. "What am I going to do, sit at home in my pajamas all day, like Howard Hughes?" he says.

So, here he is now, having made it all the way from the Jersey Shore to the Califor-

nia shore, basking in the late-afternoon Malibu sunshine. And even with so much history behind him, he is still hungry for more. Of everything.

"Yeah, I overindulge," he says. "Back when we did illegal drugs, I'm the one if you put..." He pauses here. He looks up at the sky. Maybe he needs a little help. Is he talking about what would happen if you put out a couple of lines of coke, perhaps?

He nods. That's it, exactly. "And then if you said, 'There's some in the bathroom for you' – well, don't think that later on there's going to be any left for you."

And if somebody put those lines out today, would he do them, at his age?

This being DeVito, with his appetites, there can only be one answer. "Why not? A line of coke? What's the matter? Look at what I'm doing to myself with a cup of coffee and a Diet Coke. I'm ashamed of myself. But if you knew it was good, you'd do a little bit. I wouldn't make a habit of it. But it's so beautiful. It's so wonderful that you don't want to pass it up. I mean, if somebody had some good acid, too. But, yeah, the bump. I would do it." And then once again he says, "Why not?"



PROFILE

# The Gospel of Father John Misty

How Josh Tillman quit Fleet Foxes, gobbled magic mushrooms and reinvented himself as a highly gifted folk-rock smartass **By Jonah Weiner**

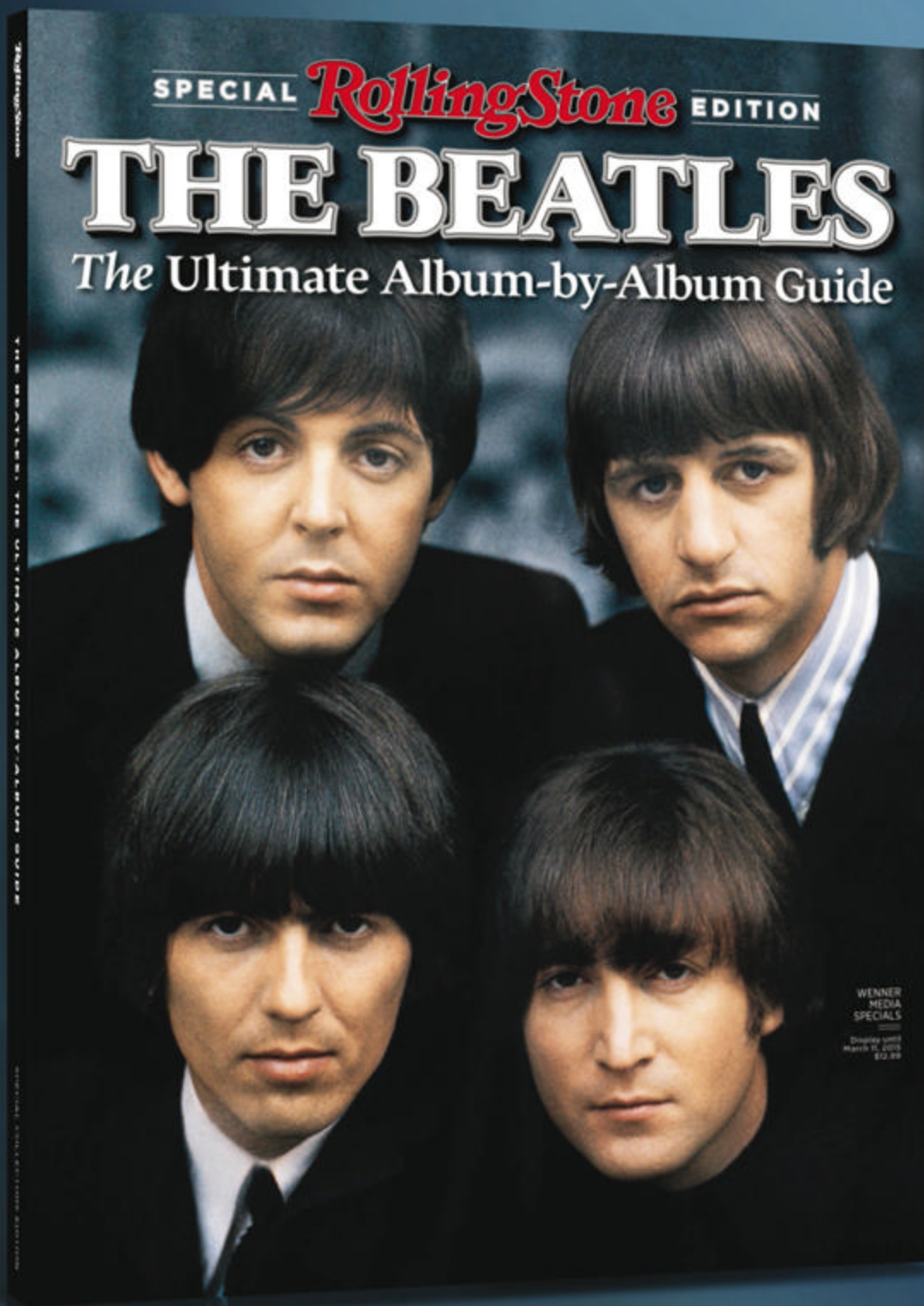
**F**ATHER JOHN MISTY PULLS UP TO THE CHATEAU Marmont in a rented Hyundai. It's two in the afternoon in Hollywood, and he's hankering for some \$18 cocktails. As the valet commandeers the budget sedan, Misty – the wry 33-year-old troubadour born Josh Tillman – steps out in an undersize velvet blazer with an embroidered banana pin on the lapel. He's got on a henley shirt unbuttoned rakishly low, and his ample beard canopies his clavicles. “It’s funny how you can see their faces glaze over when you pull up at this place in a regular car,” Tillman says.

“I used to come here and valet-park my old Econoline van, which was a trip.” The Chateau is among L.A.’s fancier establishments to valet-park anything, and the place holds a certain qualified magic for Tillman. In 2012, he quit his job as the Fleet Foxes’ drummer to focus on his own music, driving the Econoline from Seattle, where he’d been living, [Cont. on 22]

**BORED IN THE USA**

Every note Misty writes is run through an elaborate machinery of irony and self-criticism.





**ON NEWSSTANDS NOW**



## FATHER JOHN MISTY

[Cont. from 20] down through Big Sur, where he had a mushroom-fueled epiphany about songwriting while sitting naked in a tree (more on that later), and finally setting up shop in a buddy-of-a-buddy's Laurel Canyon rental shack.

Tillman has hung out at the Chateau a bunch of times, he says, with, for instance, Lana Del Rey, who invited him to open several concerts; during one visit, he met Marilyn Manson. "I had this full grown-out beard, and Marilyn Manson said, 'How long have you been a lumberjack?'" Tillman recalls. "He was wearing sideswept bangs and this pea-coat thing. I said, 'How long have you been in the gay Navy?'"

A hostess in a black dress escorts Tillman to a patio table; a waiter named Kevin arrives, recognizing Tillman: "What's up, Josh?" Tillman orders a greyhound and scans the patio. "I have a morbid fascination with this place," he says. "I don't take it too literally. I mean, I like being here and seeing Joseph Gordon-Levitt having a Cobb salad with the RZA. That's cool." He pauses. "I think coming here is kind of the most honest thing you can do in L.A., because the whole city orbits around celebrity, and anyone who tells you there's anything else going on is deluding himself." Also: "I like the spaghetti Bolognese."

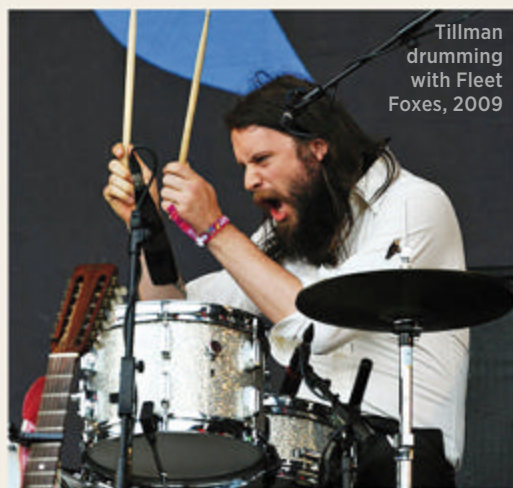
The second song on Father John Misty's new album, *I Love You, Honeybear*, is called "Chateau Lobby #4 (In C for Two Virgins)," and, as you can likely surmise, it's hardly a straight-up ode to the hotel. Crucial to Misty's warped appeal is that nothing about the project is straight-up: Every syllable Tillman sings, and every note he writes, has been run through an elaborate machinery of irony and self-criticism. On the lead single, "Bored in the USA," Tillman sings about his underemployed generation, beset by consumerism and predatory loans – but he weaves a laugh track into the song to mock his lines. "There's a lot of meta in my songs – when I'm writing, I can't avoid the fact that I'm writing," he says. With stylistic nods to Harry Nilsson, John Lennon and Neil Young, and featuring somber acoustic arrangements, sweeping orchestral suites and one synth jam, the album is, ostensibly, an account of Tillman meeting, falling in love with and marrying the filmmaker-photographer Emma Tillman. "We had our wedding in Big Sur, and I took her up in that tree," he says. But the lyrics feature sentiments not found in Valentine's Day cards, like, for instance, "Maybe love is just an economy based on resource scarcity."

Tillman is the album's antihero, casting himself, at times, in a jarringly unsympathetic light, and often deploying women as set dressing for a saga of masculine missteps and redemption: Here he is in one song, hooking up with a girl he deems idiotic, pretentious and nonetheless irresistible; here he is in another, likening his wife, in a moment of abject jealousy, to "a blow-up doll." Tillman says that at the project's outset, "I was talking big talk, like, 'I'm gonna write songs about love that aren't banal,' but when I finished the album and started playing it for people, I wanted to melt into the floor because I realized I hadn't made an album about love – I'd

his parents' religion. Instead, he got heavily into comics with skewed perspectives, like *The Far Side* and *Calvin and Hobbes*, and for a time he wanted to be a cartoonist. That dream gave way, when he got wind of Bob Dylan, to a musical fantasy, and at 19 he dropped out of New York's Nyack College – a Christian school he'd enrolled in mostly to appease his parents – and moved upstate, where a buddy was building a recording studio in a farmhouse. (Tillman's relationship with his parents, long turbulent, has lately improved – "They've recently begun acknowledging that I'm an artist" – but it's not a subject he enjoys discussing.)

The upstate plan didn't pan out, so Tillman road-tripped to Seattle with another friend, where he fell in with the local indie-folk scene and, under the name J. Tillman, recorded morose acoustic music he now mostly disavows as dull and sexless. In 2008, Fleet Foxes brought him on as their drummer. "I was making more money than I ever had," he says, but the life of a hired gun, "robotically playing these parts, night after night," started to chafe, and before long he quit the band and headed for California. It was on this trip that he ate the mushrooms, sat in the tree, and realized amid the branches that irony needn't be mutually exclusive with candor, and that he could add humor and sarcasm to his songs without compromising their power. Installed in L.A., he adopted the moniker Father John Misty as a goof and released 2012's *Fear Fun*, an album that tackles subjects from boning at Hollywood Forever Cemetery to suffering comically bad ayahuasca experiences.

We're on round three or four when Tillman stands up from the table: "I gotta have a smoke, man." In a few days, he will launch a minitour, and he's in California to rehearse – ever the peripatetic, he moved with Emma last year to New Orleans. "She's working on a movie, and I'm more or less hibernating and trying to write," he says. Tillman's habits are healthier these days than they've ever been: He quit drugs, he says, went raw-vegan for a time, and receives acupuncture and wellness advice from a guy he calls "my Qi-gong master." But the prospect of promoting the new LP has been unsettling him. "The ramp-up to any album makes me very anxious," he says. "Last night I told Emma, 'I need to go out, get drunk and cry.' And that's what I did." Above the patio's tiny smoking section, the sun starts to set, and I've got a plane to catch. Tillman plants himself on a bench with a cigarette in hand. "You go on," he says. "I'm gonna sit here and have another drink."



Tillman drumming with Fleet Foxes, 2009

**"Marilyn Manson asked me, 'How long have you been a lumberjack?' And I said, 'How long have you been in the gay Navy?'"**

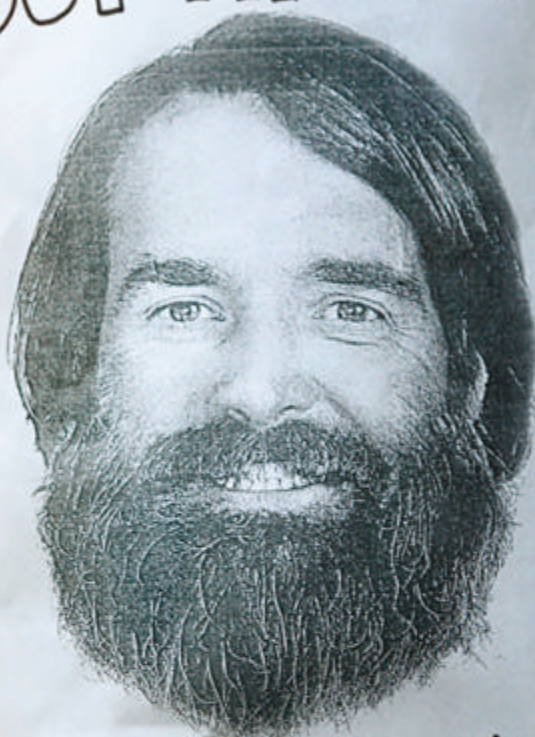
made an album about myself, in this unbelievably vulnerable way, at the risk of assassinating my own character." The cover art features a rendition of the Madonna and child, with Tillman's likeness gracing the latter's face. "I'm a baby, I'm petty and needy and jealous and greedy," he says, "and I'm turning this woman into a sacred object and a deity. This is what love and intimacy are manifesting as in my life!"

It's pretty intense conversation for midafternoon, but Tillman has always been, by his own account, an intense guy. He grew up in Maryland the eldest son of devout evangelical Christians. "It was the most suburban, bleached-flour kind of scenario you can imagine – aside from the Messianic-Judaism, Pentecostal, speaking-in-tongues, getting-slain-in-the-spirit, having-demons-cast-out-of-you stuff," he says. "For my parents, heaven and hell were real. It's bizarre to contemplate eternal damnation as an eight-year-old." A born skeptic, he never fully bought into



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# Björk

**On her gorgeous breakup album, Joni Mitchell, and childhood stardom in Iceland** By David Fricke

**T**UGGING AT THE FINGERS on her right hand, Björk counts off some recent, traumatic events in her life: a 2012 throat operation; a devastating breakup with her longtime partner, artist Matthew Barney; her mother's heart attack (she has recovered); and the death last year of studio collaborator Mark Bell. "It's been quite a dramatic time," the Icelandic singer admits, "but also very happy." Her new album, *Vulnicura* – a candid chronicle in strings and electronics of her split with Barney – hit the Top 40 in more than a dozen countries. In March, Björk, who shot to fame with the Icelandic post-punk band the Sugarcubes, will be the subject of a major audio-visual retrospective at New York's Museum of Modern Art. "It was a coincidence when this album came down in the middle of it," she says, but notes, "I get claustrophobic when it's too much of the past."

**Has the album cured your heartbreak?**

I can't begin to describe how much better I feel, just physically. Obviously, life is not that black and white. Something will happen to me in five years, and it might come back to life. But I am out of that emergency stage, when you feel like a space alien, just possessed.

**What did you get out of writing about the breakup? You even date the songs, so we know what you felt when.**

It was a survival mechanism. I thought, all the way to the last day [of the relationship], that everything would be fine. Maybe that's why it was such a shock to me. At first, I was just going to put the songs together and not say anything. But putting the months on – it felt right. It would justify being that full of self-pity [laughs]. When people listen to these lyrics, I can go, "It was only two months after the breakup. I was a teenage mess!"

**Did you sing love songs in the Sugarcubes?**

There were all these poets in the band. It was more about word jokes. "Deus" [on 1988's *Life's Too Good*] was sugary pop about God, which was ridic-

ulous. There were personal songs. [The 1987 hit] "Birthday" is about being in that magic world with a newborn. We loved turning the lyrics on their head. But when I started my solo albums, it was fresh terrain for me.

**Did music and art run in your family?**

My grandmother was quite artistic. When her children left home, she went to art school and learned how to be an abstract painter. At Christmas, she would have a party. People played bingo. The person who won got a painting. She passed away, but we still do it. I won this year's painting!

**You were 12 when you released your first album in Iceland. Did you sense that you were on a path?**

I was a little pushed by my mom. I'm not sure she was aware of what psychological work it is to be a public figure at 12. The magic of the studio was the best bit. I kind of wished it would never have to come out, that I'd just make album after album. The guys who recorded me wanted to do another one, but I said, "No, I want to start bands with kids my age."

**Did any female singer-songwriters from the Seventies inspire you as a teenager?**

I loved Joni Mitchell. I never heard her folk records. But I learned [1976's] *Hejira* and [1977's] *Don Juan's Reckless Daughter* by heart when I was 15. She was creating her own universe; she wasn't a guest in a man's world. And it was her chord progressions. I liked music that was modal, more chromatic. There is more room for the singer to improvise.

**When you had the throat operation, were you afraid you might lose your voice for good?**

I couldn't speak for three weeks. My daughter and I made notes for each other – it became like a game. But the album was a new beginning. The chorus in "Lionsong" – I was in this forest outside Reykjavík, warming up, opening my throat like a bird. It was cathartic – you realize the tension that built up, because you were protecting that part of you.

**Are you prepared to relive your breakup when you perform the new songs live?**

I know I have to do it. If I could have skipped these heartbreak feelings, just go to the next bus stop, I would have been like, "Yes, please!" But there were no two ways about it.



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# Random Notes

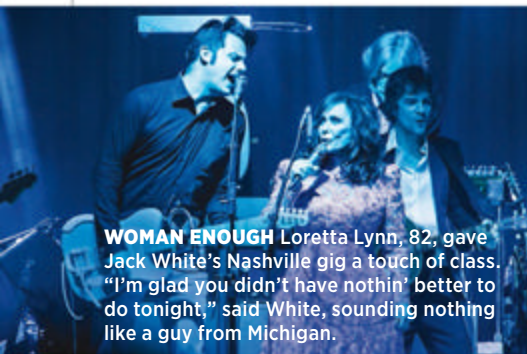


## Taylor's Quality Haim Time

Not long after hitting a Justin Timberlake concert in Brooklyn together, Taylor Swift and the sisters of Haim flew to Hawaii for a vacation that included hiking, whale watching and lots of glam shots on yachts. Haim will be opening for Swift on 17 dates of her upcoming mega-tour, which starts in May. "Can it be summer already?" said Alana Haim.

### CHARLI IN CHARGE

Charli XCX dropped the boom-clap at ROLLING STONE's Super Bowl party in Arizona. "I thought it was baseball until two months ago," she said of the Super Bowl. "I'm from the U.K."



**WOMAN ENOUGH** Loretta Lynn, 82, gave Jack White's Nashville gig a touch of class. "I'm glad you didn't have nothin' better to do tonight," said White, sounding nothing like a guy from Michigan.



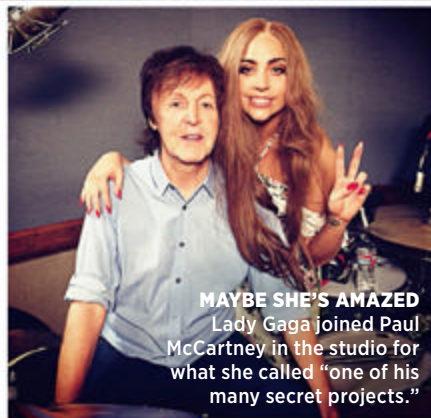
### SHOP WITH ME

Sam Smith stocked up on summer-festival wear in Colorado. "Cowboy couture!" he said.



## Air Force Grunge

Vacationing in his home state, Hawaii, President Obama visited local ukulele enthusiast Eddie Vedder at his place down the beach on Oahu. The Pearl Jam singer – who campaigned for Obama in 2008 and 2012 – showed off his new birthday gift: a Seabob underwater jet ski that goes to a depth of 130 feet. Careful, bro!



### MAYBE SHE'S AMAZED

Lady Gaga joined Paul McCartney in the studio for what she called "one of his many secret projects."



### SCHOOL'S OUT

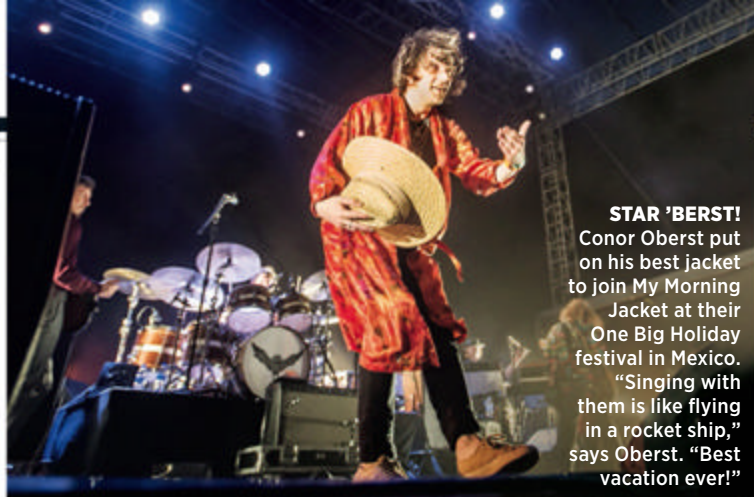
Johnny Depp joined Alice Cooper at an Anaheim, California, charity show. "He has this old-school rock & roll feel in his playing," says Cooper.

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: TAYLOR SWIFT/INSTAGRAM; GUSTAVO CABALLERO/GETTY IMAGES FOR MILLER LITE; PETE SOUZA/THE WHITE HOUSE; FERN/SPLASH NEWS; LADY GAGA/INSTAGRAM; DAVID JAMES SWANSON; SAM SMITH/INSTAGRAM



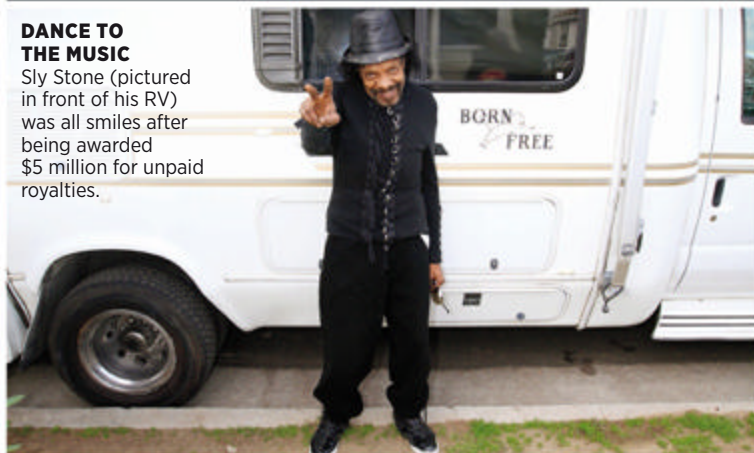


**GOLDEN BOY**  
Usher drew a crowd in Venice, California, when he pretended to be a street performer for a promo video.



**STAR 'BERST!**  
Conor Oberst put on his best jacket to join My Morning Jacket at their One Big Holiday festival in Mexico. "Singing with them is like flying in a rocket ship," says Oberst. "Best vacation ever!"

**DANCE TO THE MUSIC**  
Sly Stone (pictured in front of his RV) was all smiles after being awarded \$5 million for unpaid royalties.



**MY BEAUTIFUL DARK TWISTED WAFFLE**  
Before the big game, Chrissy Teigen, John Legend, Kanye West and Kim Kardashian hit the local Waffle House.



**WAYNE'S WORLD**  
Lil Wayne hosted a pre-party with gusto.

## Super Ballin'

A record 118.5 million viewers tuned in to watch the dancing sharks, cyborg lion, and cameos by Missy Elliott and Lenny Kravitz in Katy Perry's Super Bowl XLIX halftime set. (There was also a game.) "I gotta keep reminding myself I put my pants on [one] leg at a time," said an exuberant Perry afterward. "But, yes, I am incredibly proud!" She also got a new tattoo on her right ring finger to celebrate.



**WALK ON** Weeks after launching his Pono music player, Neil Young stepped out with lady friend Daryl Hannah in Malibu. Young is in the studio with Willie Nelson's sons, Lukas and Micah. "I want to keep doing what I do," Young says.



# Saturday Night Live. 40 Years. 141 Cast Members. We Rank Them All.

By ROB SHEFFIELD

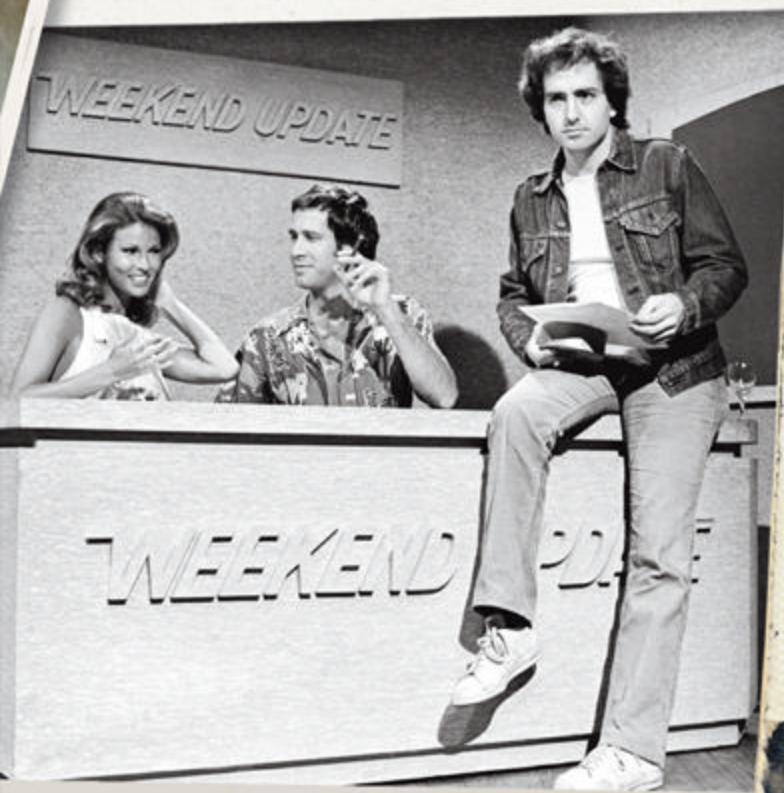
**L**ET'S BREAK IT DOWN. THE ENTIRE CAST OF "SATURDAY NIGHT LIVE," ALL 40 years of it, ranked from top to bottom. Insanely ambitious? You bet. Absurdly exhaustive? No doubt. Ruthlessly complete? Damn straight. From the Samurai Hitman to the poor bastard who played Walter Mondale. Everybody. ✚ So – live from New York – a passionate, definitive, opinionated, subjective, irresponsible and indefensible breakdown of the Not Ready for Prime Time Players. It's a celebration of Lorne Michaels' creation 40 years on – and as every *SNL* fan knows, part of loving the show means surfing through the lows along with the



## Not Yet Ready for Prime Time

Clockwise from top left: Fey and Poehler; Curtin, Martin and Aykroyd; Piscopo and Murphy; Samberg; Myers and Carvey; Raquel Welch, Chase and Michaels; Sandler; Radner. Center: Chase and Belushi.





**WAYNE'S BEST/WORST**

JULIETTE LEWIS  
SILENCE OF THE LAMBS  
REBECCA DE MORNAY  
GEENA DAVIS  
DEMI MOORE  
JONATHAN DEMME  
LIVE FROM NEW YORK  
IT'S SATURDAY NIGHT



highs. Keep in mind: We're not ranking their careers, merely their stints on *SNL*. Also, we're ranking them strictly for what they did onscreen, not behind the scenes. As for who counts as an *SNL* player, there's a lot of gray area. The whole point of this list is ranking everybody, not just the big names, so it tries to err on the side of being inclusive. "Writers who occasionally showed up in sketches" is a mighty crowded category, but they're ultimately judged by onscreen impact. It's a game of inches out there. And no guest hosts, no matter how often they return. No Alec Baldwin or Andy Kaufman or Justin Timberlake, even though they've had way more airtime than many cast members.

Some of these stories get grim, especially below the Joe Piscopo Line. (You don't want to be on the Cleghorne side of the Piscopo Line.) But these are all comedians who made it to the big leagues. This list is full of worthy performers *SNL* bumbled, or ugly ducklings who turned into swans elsewhere. So if you were funny in *Anchorman 2* or you ended up a legend on *Seinfeld*, that's sweet, but it doesn't factor in here. The hilariously disastrous misuse of talent is part of what makes it *SNL* – we wouldn't want it any other way.

Also crucial: If you were an *SNL* player and your feelings get bruised easily, you might want to stop reading now. Like Stuart Smalley says, it's easier to put on slippers than to car-pet the world.

1

## John Belushi

1975-1979



Nobody embodied the highs and lows of *Saturday Night Live* like

Belushi. He was the first rock & roll star of comedy – a touch of John Lennon soul behind all that Keith Richards pirate bravado. All the extremes were there in his weird physique – a wrestler's body with a dancer's feet, a palooka face

with a showgirl's eyelashes. He was the first to make a cocaine joke on *SNL* (sixth episode – Beethoven takes a hit from the snuffbox and turns into Ray Charles), as well as the first to make the host (Buck Henry) gush blood after accidentally slashing him in the head with his samurai sword. There was always something boyishly vulnerable in his madness, whether he was doing the slow burn (Captain Kirk, George Wallace) or exploding (his horrifying Sam Peckinpah). Belushi was the "live" in *Saturday Night Live*, the one who made the show happen on the edge. We should have gotten a lot more years with him than we did. But no.

**GREATEST HIT:** "Samurai Hitman," where Belushi proves he doesn't need words – just a robe and a sword – to turn a one-joke premise into a savage comic ballet.

2

## Eddie Murphy

1980-1984



It's customary (and accurate) to say Eddie Murphy is the

only reason *SNL* survived the five-year wilderness without Lorne Michaels. Nobody had seen anything like him. He stood out from anyone else on TV, mostly by being so young – he was the first post-boomer comedy star, a kid born in the Sixties and down with the Eighties. He mocked *SNL*'s racial hang-ups (which isn't to say he made them go away). Murphy could make any moment memorable – the shooting of Buckwheat, the boiling of Larry the Lobster, the C-I-L-L-ing of his landlord. But he was funny just standing still, as in the classic *Tootsie* sketch that basically consisted of Gary Kroeger putting makeup on Murphy. He knew how to stare into a TV camera like he owned it.

**GREATEST HIT:** His 1981 "Kill My Landlord" poem remains a heartwarming piece of verse. "Dark and lonely on the summer night/Kill my landlord, kill my landlord/Watchdog barking – do he bite?"

3

## Tina Fey

2000-2006



You could argue that most of her onscreen contribution

was "Weekend Update," but Fey did a lot more than salvage "Update" from a decade-long losing streak – it swiftly became the highlight of the show, as the entire franchise remade itself around the wry, sardonic, not-afraid-of-her-brain Fey style. She slapped *SNL* out of its late-Nineties coma. Suddenly the skits were full of ass-kicking women, just because Fey proved how much they could get away with. And her 2008 return as Sarah Palin might be the most brilliant move *SNL* ever made. Talk about a hot streak – it was a moment when all America spent the week waiting to see what Fey would come up with on Saturday.

**GREATEST HIT:** "I can see Russia from my house!" almost made it worth having Palin around.

4

## Mike Myers

1989-1995



Myers has kept a low profile since his Austin Powers days,

so at this point he seems curiously obscure. But more than anyone, he epitomized the manic, art-damaged energy that revitalized comedy in the early Nineties. Like his British idols Peter Sellers and Peter Cook, he threw himself into his characters with madcap enthusiasm – metalhead Wayne, middle-aged yenta Linda Richman, monkey-stroking German aesthete Dieter. He missed the first few episodes in 1992 because he was working on the *Wayne's World 2* screenplay; it turned into a nationwide vigil praying for Myers to return. The only word to sum up his genius is "asphinctersayswhat?"

5

## Dan Aykroyd

1975-1979



Of the original greats, Aykroyd is the least imitated – just because

nobody else can do what he did. His seriousness, his biker-intellectual intensity – he could grab your attention just standing onstage for the "good nights" and asking if anyone could sell him fuel tanks for his '71 Harley. The classic sketch where he's a grumpy mechanic telling his daughter Gilda a bedtime story about doing a wheel alignment – only Aykroyd could make that so touching as well as funny. He had a real empathy for American hucksters and sleazebags – what makes the "Bass-o-Matic" sketch isn't the joke (a fish in a blender, big deal), it's Aykroyd's demented grin.

**GREATEST HIT:** President Jimmy Carter, talking down a kid from a bad acid trip. "Remember, you're a living organism on this planet and you're very safe. You've just taken a heavy drug. Relax, stay inside and listen to some music – do you have any Allman Brothers?" If the actual President Carter could have governed like that, the 1970s might have turned out differently.

6

## Bill Murray

1977-1980



He was the cast's first "new guy," which

probably gave him that underdog's mean streak. More than anyone, he embodied *SNL*'s this-could-be-you realness; he looked like a random Seventies burnout who happened to bluff his way to the stage – he made it seem like anyone could do it. Nobody's ever been so good at making audiences feel like *they* were funny, which in many ways is the essence of *SNL*.



**GREATEST HIT:** Nick the Lounge Singer, who treats every dismal gig like it could finally be his chance to shine. Whether he's in the Zephyr Room at Lake Minne-nehonka or the Powder Room on Meatloaf Mountain, he croons his heart out: "The first couple on the floor will also get their picture on the cover of next week's *Breezy Point Lodge Bulletin*, so, ladies and gentlemen – it's dancing time!"

7

## Phil Hartman

1986-1994



The grown-up in the room. In the credits, he's not hanging on

the street like most of the others; he's relaxing at a swank lounge with a blonde. (Hard to watch, now that we know the blonde was the real-life cokehead wife who killed him in 1998.) He was nicknamed "the Glue" for holding the show together. Chris Farley's motivational-speaker rant never could have worked without Hartman as the cool dad in chinos, keeping a straight face. No role was too small for him. He was a master at playing bitter old men; his Sinatra made Piscopo's look like a cream puff. ("I got chunks of guys like you in my stool!") But his speciality was charming assholes, from the Colon Blow ad to Bill Clinton. Oh, that smug smile when he tells the Secret Service, "There's gonna be a *whole bunch* of things we don't tell Mrs. Clinton."

**GREATEST HIT:** "Unfrozen Caveman Lawyer," where he sums up the classic pitch of the all-American con man: "Your world frightens and confuses me.... But there is one thing I *do* know."

8

## Amy Poehler

2001-2008



She got more amazing every year. She could do warmth, yet

was always buzzing with a real don't-mess-with-me hostility never far from the



## Like Buttah

Clockwise from top: Murray as Nick the Lounge Singer; Murphy as Mr. Robinson; Myers as Linda Richman, host of "Coffee Talk."



surface. The ultimate pro – the way she read and responded to the people around her raised everybody's game. She revived the ancient concept that the "Weekend Update" anchor should also raise hell the rest of the show. Poehler and Fey have more chemistry than any *SNL* duo since the Blues Brothers. It's a tragedy if they don't host every awards show from now on.

**GREATEST HIT:** Betty Caruso on "Bronx Beat," an urban mom grousing about her husband, the weather and everything else. ("You know what word I

hate? 'Hemoglobin!') You can see that caustic edge in the way she sneers when Maya Rudolph starts to cry: "Here we go with the waterworks!"

9

## Gilda Radner

1975-1980



The most beloved of the original cast – in the years between Mary

Tyler Moore and *Seinfeld*'s Elaine, Radner was the prototype for the brainy city girl with a bundle of neuroses. She looked frail,

but she was a live wire whether she was playing bratty kids, pushy talk-show hosts or old ladies like Emily Litella, who spoke out on "endangered feces," "natural racehorses" and the "deaf penalty." Like so many other *SNL* legends, she died way too young and remains missed.

**GREATEST HIT:** Lisa Loopner, patron saint of nerdy girls everywhere.

10

## Chevy Chase

1975-1977



Strange as it sounds, Chase might be the most *under-rated* *SNL*

player. True, he stuck around for only one full season, but so did Farrah on *Charlie's Angels* – it took him only one season to define the franchise. Of all the original cast members, Chase was the one guy who got how TV worked – the others were theater types. So if you check out the first episode, which is 80 percent unwatchable, Chase is the only one who knows how to stare right into the camera without flinching. He looks like a coldhearted bastard surrounded by a bunch of needy kids. But without that deadpan arrogance, the whole *SNL* style of humor would fall flat. (By the 12th episode, his castmates are doing jokes about how much they all hate him.) He was famous for his stumbling Gerald Ford impersonation, but he was even sharper and more merciless as Ronald Reagan, the only killer Reagan *SNL* ever had. Alternate-history question: If Chase had stayed on *SNL*, would he have sunk Reagan the way he sank Ford?

**GREATEST HIT:** Chase reports an item about the *Peanuts* bird Woodstock. He's getting replaced by "a bird named Altamont, who will beat the other birds to death with a pool cue." The audience gasps. They're horrified. Chase loves it. And this is 1975. The whole *Saturday Night Live* story in 10 seconds.



**11**

## Dana Carvey

1986-1993



Carvey was the greatest impersonations guy in *SNL* history – his impressions were usually darker and more compelling characters than the originals. His Ross Perot was way more than a parody of a politician – Carvey turned the character into an American archetype worthy of Randy Newman, sneering “Here’s the deal, see” in the voice of every boss or principal you ever despised. When people try to imitate Johnny Carson or George H.W. Bush (or Lorne Michaels), they’re usually just doing Carvey’s impression.

**GREATEST HIT:** Perot behind the wheel, taking Phil Hartman’s Admiral Stockdale for a final joyride. “That was world-class.”

**12**

## Will Ferrell

1995-2002



Ferrell’s *SNL* strategy was basically the opposite of Chevy Chase’s: Stick around for years, make your mark as a team player, make everyone around you funnier, and (this is the really weird part) get a hundred times funnier *after* you leave. Indeed, the hardest thing about appreciating Ferrell’s *SNL* tenure is that none of us knew the glories of *Anchorman* and *Talladega Nights* were yet to come. Great Odin’s raven!

**GREATEST HIT:** Banging the cowbell to “(Don’t Fear) The Reaper,” his beard and belly jiggling to the music.

**13**

## Bill Hader

2005-2013



The unquestioned MVP by his last few seasons – a master shape-shifter who put real

humanity into his characters. His weaselly newscaster Herb Welch or club kid Stefan would have fallen flat without Hader’s affectionate touch. He was the most crucial utility player since Hartman – a glue guy who never needed to be the center of attention, just serving any kind of role.

**GREATEST HIT:** Stefan raves about New York’s hottest clubs (“Built from the bucket list of a dying pervert, this Battery Park bitch parade is now managed by overweight game-show host Fat Sajak”) and promotes a fundraiser for Doctors Without Boners.

**14**

## Kristen Wiig

2005-2012



One of a kind. You could argue she ran too many characters into

the ground – Gilly again? – but she had a knack for high-strung basket cases, from her flirting expert Rebecca Larue (“I’m just really *hearing* you”) to “Cougar Den” host Toni Ward. When Lana Del Rey showed up, she seemed like a real-life Kristen Wiig character. Wiig got the most sentimental send-off of any cast member ever, complete with Mick Jagger singing “She’s a Rainbow,” and she earned it.

**GREATEST HIT:** Mindy Grayson, a washed-out theater queen who still dreams of her Broadway glory in smash failures like *And Sarah Made a Sound* (“the story of a mute girl who desperately wanted to say the word ‘jazz’”) and *Sassy Slacks* of 1963.

**15**

## Chris Farley

1990-1995



Reach for a bottle of Schmitts Gay and pour some on the floor for this guy. Farley made his act look like impulsive slapstick, but all you have to do is look at all the failed Farley imitators to see how intricate it was. For all his Chippen- dales antics, he had an easily

overlooked finesse, especially when he was playing uptight mansplainers – like the strangely poignant “Medieval Scalders” sketch, where he mentors his son Macaulay Culkin: “You’d be surprised how many different things you can heat up and pour on people.”

**GREATEST HIT:** “Matt Foley, Motivational Speaker” – “You’re gonna be doing a lot of doobie rolling when you’re living in a van down by the river!”

**16**

## Rachel Dratch

1999-2006



If you tuned in to *SNL* on May 1st, 2004, you saw Dratch as Harry Potter,

quaking under the spell of Lindsay Lohan’s cleavage – then, a few minutes later, as Debbie Downer at Disney World. One of the best nights any *SNL* player has ever had. Dratch had no ego – just the will to try anything. Her Sheldon on “Wake Up Wakefield!” was an agonizing portrayal of adolescent overtrying, and only Dratch could make it so soulfully funny.

**GREATEST HIT:** Debbie Downer was unstoppable, kind of like feline AIDS. Which is the number-one killer of domestic cats!

**17**

## Adam Sandler

1990-1995



The ultimate “love him or hate him” guy. Sorry – Operaman

alone would make him rank high on this list. Sandler was the first to get a Boston-Irish accent right on national TV (“Get into the *faah* left lane, then take the Mass Pike west and you’ll see a wicked-huge Radio Shack”), which made him a local hero, even if it set off a very unfortunate comedy trend. Weirdly forgotten historical footnote: Everybody assumed Sandler was gay, because his first memorable bit was about

coming out to his family on Thanksgiving. That made him seem edgier than he turned out to be.

**GREATEST HIT:** “The Chanukah Song,” a major cultural event. Seriously, nobody had any idea Shatner was Jewish.

**18**

## Maya Rudolph

2000-2007



Rudolph was always dauntingly versatile, yet loose and cool.

She was the only comedian worthy of doing Beyoncé, back in the Destiny’s Child days – Britannica from Gemini’s Twin was a cartoon diva, but also a real-thing diva. Rudolph did finely shaded characters but could also aim for the cheap seats with her over-the-top Donatella Versace tantrums. Cue the rampage music.

**GREATEST HIT:** Her Donatella children’s specials remain the stuff of nightmares. What could be more terrifying than Donatella singing kiddie songs? (“Imagine all the happy children when they hear me and John Galliano sing that tired-ass teapot song!”)

**19**

## Jon Lovitz

1985-1990



During the final credits of the horrific 1985-1986 season,

Michaels watches as Yankees manager Billy Martin sets fire to the dressing room. The only cast member Michaels pulls from the room is Lovitz. Good move. Lovitz didn’t have the widest range, but he didn’t need one – he knew exactly what he was good at: playing slimeballs, from his Master Thespian to his “yeah, that’s the ticket” liar to the bewigged perv from “Tales of Ribaldry.” Lovitz had the creepiest eyebrows in *SNL* history. *Acting!*

**GREATEST HIT:** Mephistopheles goes on *The People’s Court* so he can command the viewers at home to worship him.

THIS SPREAD: 11, 12, 15, 20, 24: NBC/PHOTO BANK/GETTY IMAGES; 13, 23, 25: DANA EDLSON/NBC/PHOTO BANK/GETTY IMAGES; 14: JOHN LAMPARSKI/WIREIMAGE; 16: CARLO ALLEGRI/GETTY IMAGES; 17: RON GALLERIA, LTD./WIREIMAGE; 18: JAMIE MCCARTHY/WIREIMAGE; 21: THE LIFE PICTURE COLLECTION/GETTY IMAGES; 22: VERA ANDERSON/WIREIMAGE



20

# Al Franken

1975-1980; 1985-1995



What a country – the punk who wrote the “Roman

Vomitorium” sketch is now a senator from Minnesota. (Alas, not alongside the late, great Sen. John Blutarsky.) Franken had two totally distinct runs on *SNL*. In the Seventies, he and partner Tom Davis were the gangly goofballs who resembled the kids in the audience, the ones Belushi dismissed as “the angel-dust crowd.” Then he surprised everyone by coming back in the Nineties as self-help guru Stuart Smalley, one of *SNL*’s most beloved and original recurring characters, at a time when 12-step-speak was still very much in the closet.

**GREATEST HIT:** Stuart Smalley meets Michael Jordan (he calls him Michael J., to protect his anonymity) and tells him, "Denial ain't just a river in Egypt."



## This Party Has Everything

Clockwise from top: Wiig as Kathie Lee; Ferrell and Oteri as cheerleaders; Carvey as the Church Lady; Hader as Stefon.



21

## Chris Rock

1990-1993



Rock always had a hard time getting on the air – there was a

classic *In Living Color* sketch about Rock getting thrown out by NBC security who refuse to believe he's a cast member. But make no mistake: Even back then, Rock was hungrier and faster than anyone else. Whenever he got a sketch (barely once a month, usually in the final 15 minutes), he blew the rest of the episode away, with his militant Nat X ("What's the matter, Whitney – you can't get a black body-guard?") or his B-boy Onski from "I'm Chillin'." Nobody in the history of the show inspired more Monday-morning "Who the hell was that guy?" conversations. If he never worked a day

23

## Fred Armisen

2002-2013



Should you dock Armisen points for being even more brilliant

on *Portlandia*? Nah. Only Armisen could thrive so long on *SNL* in so many different kinds of roles while retaining his own punk-drummer weirdness. Who else could play both Lou Reed and Liberace?

24

## Laraine Newman

1975-1980



The most underrated member of the original cast. As the California

girl of the bunch, not to mention the second-youngest (after Aykroyd), she now seems ahead of her time – from her pioneering Valley Girl (probably the first time “bitchin’ bod” was uttered on national TV) to her oft-disturbing vampire-chick goth characters. Her most brilliant moment: playing Manson girl Squeaky Fromme in an ad for potholders made of human hair – Newman stares a hole in the camera as she commands, “You better buy them, you little piggies. I’m not kidding.” It was terrifying, and not in a cute way.

25

## Jason Sudeikis

2005-2013



The only devil who could rival Lovitz, mostly because

Sudeikis turned the devil into such a regular guy. Sudeikis was the cornfed sports dude who seemed affable on the surface, playing lots of husbands and dads. But it didn't take much to unlock his freaky side – the metalhead in Jon Bovi, Mr. A-Hole, the dancer in the red tracksuit or his unhinged Joe Biden.


22

## Andy Samberg

2005-2012



“Lazy Sunday”  
basically  
invented  
YouTube

 – most people in 2005 found out the site existed by frantically

clicking around trying to rewatch Samberg and Chris Parnell mack on cupcakes. (Ironic, given how *SNL* is stricter than Prince when it comes to policing YouTube.) Despite Samberg's boyish energy, he had real staying power – let's just say the list of stars who were funny on *SNL* and then went on to star in funny sitcoms is a very short list, and Samberg is near the top.



**26**

## Jan Hooks

1986-1991



One of the virtuosos – Hooks could play 18th-century aristocrats (on “Tales of Ribaldry”) or a truck-stop waitress canoodling with Willie Nelson. It was rare in the 1980s to see a Southern woman on TV played by an authentic Southern woman, which is only one of the reasons the world grieved when Hooks died last fall. One fondly remembered moment: her sincere wince of pain during the “good nights” when Christopher Walken announced Atlanta had just lost the 1992 World Series. Sing on, Candy Sweeney.

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**27**

## David Spade

1990-1996



Spade invented the “Hey, Jackson Browne – 1973 called, they want their hair back” joke template. He doesn’t get enough credit for that. He pattered in the background for years, waving good night every week with that “maybe next time” sad-puppy look, before he found greatness with his “Hollywood Minute” segment. So bitchy and (the key) so pointless. Best and meanest line: “Aaaaaw, Ric Ocasek – why the long face?”

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**28**

## Seth Meyers

2001-2014



The longest-serving “Update” host – and the most tactful at walking a fine line between wisass and well-mannered. His trademark niceness was never a drawback – it served him well in terms of schmoozing with guest commentators, which Meyers did better than any

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“Update” guy ever. He unleashed his bitchy side in the “Really?!?” segments with Poehler, whether he was ranting about birth-control laws or the Keebler elves’ drug habit.

**29-31**

## The Ringers



Martin Short  
1984-1985



Billy Crystal  
1984-1985



Christopher Guest  
1984-1985

SNL took the Steinbrenner approach of bringing in these three free agents as hired guns – they walked in and took over the team for a year. Crystal finally became a superstar with his Fernando bit and his “I hate when that happens” routine with Guest. Short reprised some of his broader SCTV bits. It wasn’t a career peak for any of them, but it kept a weak franchise ticking for one last season, before Michaels ended his five-year absence.

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**32**

## Tim Kazurinsky

1981-1984



One of the most under-appreciated players ever, from the much-scorned early-Eighties cast. The Kaz had a virtuoso collection of nervous twitches, especially as sweaty little Dr. Jack Badofsky, the absolute master of terrible puns. It was a treat to hear the audience boo and groan whenever Dr. Jack lectured on diseases like influenza – if you catch it from the Mississippi River, you’ve got “Huckleberry Finn-fluza,” if “you sneeze your head off, that’s Anne Boleyn-fluza,” while “coal miners’ daughters are susceptible to Loretta Lynn-fluza.” Or gonorrhea: “If the *New York*

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*Post* finds out you’ve got it, everyone in the city’s gonorrhead all about it!”

**33**

## Ana Gasteyer

1996-2002



The host of NPR’s “Delicious Dish” (“Schweddy Balls”) carved out her own distinct niche – “Rob Schneider except taller and funnier and female” doesn’t quite cover it – and she could get laughs with a nasty look. Her “Martha Stewart celebrates St. Patrick’s Day” sketch is to die for, especially the way Stewart utters the words “You must be Irish, because my penis is Dublin.”

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**34**

## Dennis Miller

1985-1991



The Eighties, man – Elton John married a woman and Dennis Miller was funny. It’ll be tough explaining either fact to future generations. But let history record that when the Berlin Wall came down, Miller had the right cheap smirk at the right time, comparing the event to “Dean Martin and Jerry Lewis getting back together. I haven’t really enjoyed any of their previous collaborations, and I’m not sure I need to see their new stuff.”

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**35**

## Chris Parnell

1998-2006



Never a show pony, but a workhorse. Next time you watch the “more cowbell” sketch, keep your eye on Parnell. Without his deadpan ballast, it’s just Christopher Walken reading cue cards at four giggly boys. Dude did a lot of that, which is why he went on to greatness on *30 Rock* and *Archer*.

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**36**

## Jimmy Fallon

1998-2004



*The Tonight Show* is where Fallon was always meant to be – sketch comedy was never his métier, especially since he never shed his rookie habit of snickering on camera. But he killed with his lovingly detailed rock-star impersonations, from “The Barry Gibb Talk Show” to his Guinness-swilling Van Morrison.

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**37**

## Kate McKinnon

2012-present



The brightest light in recent years. Her cop show with Aidy Bryant, *Dyke and Fats*, needs a spinoff movie. It takes a sick enthusiasm to bring off her vicious portrayal of starving Russian peasant Olya Povlatsky: “Our only exports are homophobia and snow.”

It takes a sick enthusiasm to bring off her vicious portrayal of starving Russian peasant Olya Povlatsky: “Our only exports are homophobia and snow.”

**38**

## Don Pardo

1975-1981; 1982-2014



Oh, Don Pardo – you beautiful, velvet-voiced, credits-announcing, “Weird Al” cameo-making, old-school showbiz-evoking bastard. We never saw your face, yet we loved every word you said. R.I.P.

“Weird Al” cameo-making, old-school showbiz-evoking bastard. We never saw your face, yet we loved every word you said. R.I.P.

**39**

## Cecily Strong

2012-present



Bring her back to “Update,” OK? Dropping her to keep Colin Jost was a lose-lose move. Her greatest hit: “One time I got banged in the Statue of Liberty’s head. I felt like I was hearing all of America’s thoughts. And America was thinking, ‘More Manual Blondicks, si-vous-please!’”

Her greatest hit: “One time I got banged in the Statue of Liberty’s head. I felt like I was hearing all of America’s thoughts. And America was thinking, ‘More Manual Blondicks, si-vous-please!’”



# The 10 Best Episodes

## 1 Michael Jordan Public Enemy 9/28/91, Season 17, Ep. 1

Jordan gets a "Daily Affirmation" from Stuart Smalley: "I don't have to dribble the ball fast or throw the ball into the basket. All I have to do is be the best Michael I can be!" An ad for Schmitt's Gay, "Wayne's World," Nat X, Public Enemy sending off the late Miles Davis with "Bring tha Noize" – and for the just-departed Dr. Seuss, the Rev. Jesse Jackson shows up to read *Green Eggs and Ham*. A triumphant moment of comic invention at real-time warp speed.

## 2 Steve Martin The Blues Brothers 4/22/78, Season 3, Ep. 18

Greatest *SNL* host ever, hands down. Highlights: medieval doctor Theodoric of York, "King Tut," Martin and Radner dancing in the dark.

## 3 Richard Pryor Gil Scott-Heron 12/13/75, Season 1, Ep. 7

Pryor and Chase play Word Association ("Dead honky!"), *Exorcist 2* ("Your mama eats kitty litter!") and Pryor's wino-meets-junkie vignette.

## 4 Robert Guillaume Duran Duran 3/19/83, Season 8, Ep. 16

Practically an all-Murphy episode, with a special report on the shooting of Buckwheat. Murphy also plays assassin John David Stutts, whose high school class voted him Most Likely to Kill Buckwheat.



Steve Martin, King Tut, 1978

## 5 Christopher Walken Arrested Development 10/24/92, Season 18, Ep. 4

Walken sings, dances, plays the world's most trivial psychic, and makes love to the camera as the Continental. ("Throw champagne in my face once – shame on you. Throw champagne in my face twice – shame on me.") Plus, Carvey and Hartman as Ross

Perot and Admiral Stockdale: "Griiidlock!"

## 6 Elliott Gould Leon Redbone 5/29/76, Season 1, Ep. 22

In terms of 1970s hosts, Gould was up there with Martin for guaranteed gold – his episodes are all classics. Here, he's the NBC suit who cancels *Star Trek* in "The

Last Voyage of the Starship Enterprise," while Dr. Chase treats Radner's uvula with a knock-knock joke. ("Babs' uvula who?" "I don't know, Babs. But I do know this – you've really let your uvula go to the dogs.")

## 7 Anne Hathaway The Killers 10/4/08, Season 34, Ep. 4

Fey's Sarah Palin debates Sudeikis' Joe Biden ("I believe marriage is meant to be a sacred institution between two unwilling teenagers"); Samberg's Mark Wahlberg talks to animals.

## 8 Candice Bergen Frank Zappa 12/11/76, Season 2, Ep. 10

Bergen hosts an "Adopt Belushi for Christmas" contest; Radner campaigns for the Right to Extreme Stupidity League; Aykroyd sells the children's toy Bag O' Glass.

## 9 Lindsay Lohan Usher 5/1/04, Season 29, Ep. 18

The debut of Debbie Downer, at Disney World – the only *SNL* scene ever improved by the fact that nobody can keep a straight face. Lohan is brilliant in the Hogwarts sketch, casting her spell over Harry Potter.

## 10 Eddie Murphy Lionel Richie 12/11/82, Season 8, Ep. 9

Only Murphy was hot enough to host while he was *still in the cast*, presenting the Gumby holiday special: "Merry Christmas, damn it!"

40

## Molly Shannon 1995-2001



Docked a dozen or so notches for Mary Katherine Gallagher – the most dreaded recurring character since Julia Sweeney donned the Pat wig. But Shannon stood out in nearly everything else she did. She was a

welcome sign of life, keeping the faith through some of *SNL*'s most feeble seasons. Especially as the other half of "Delicious Dish" – there's something so sad in the way she confesses to spicing up her soda water with a little ice. "Actually, I don't know if you've noticed: There are *many* different kinds of ice." And something so disturbing in her Angelina Jolie impression: "I am so in love with you right now!"

41

## Taran Killam 2010-present



His stock is still rising – the past few seasons would have been dreary without him. His 1860s newspaper critic Jebidiah Atkinson gives scathing reviews to everything from Lincoln's "Gettysburg Address" ("Four

snores and seven yawns ago") to *A Charlie Brown Christmas*: "No one wants to watch neurotic children trudging in the snow to smooth jazz." Amen. Not one of *SNL*'s countless Jesus jokes can hang with Jebidiah's review of the Bible's nativity story. "Let's see – a guy travels across the country with his family to find out the hotel is closed? I liked it more when it was called *National Lampoon's Vacation*."



**42**

## Don Novello

1978-1980; 1985-1986



Although primarily a writer, he knocked it out of the park as

Father Guido Sarducci – the rock critic for the Vatican newspaper, chain-smoking through homilies about the Last Brunch. The ultimate hip priest, Father Guido might have been the inspiration for Pope Francis.

**43**

## Vanessa Bayer

2010-present



In a congested cast where faces get lost in the crowd – who can

forget the game show “New Cast Member or Arcade Fire?” – Bayer always manages to stand out. Her ex-porn star commercials never get old: “With a watch, you’ll never have to stop a stranger on the street to ask him, ‘Are you my dad?’”

**44**

## Rob Schneider

1990-1994



“Cheeburger cheeburger,” my ass – the all-time great Greek-diner

gag is the one where Schneider says, “You like-a da juice, eh? Da juice is good?” He knew how to take one stupid not-even-a-real-joke and beat it until it bleeds. He proved that as the Richmeister, who was hilarious the first hundred or so times.

**45**

## Julia Louis-Dreyfus

1982-1985



Like Chris Rock, she stood out from the pack even in this early

phase – a virtuoso wiggler and eye-roller. In the early

Eighties, she was *SNL*’s answer to Martha Quinn. In fact, some of us started watching *Seinfeld* because it was the Julia Louis-Dreyfus comeback show.

**46**

## Kenan Thompson

2003-present



Twelve seasons and counting. True, he often might have seemed more

at home on Nickelodeon, where he originated, but he killed as the “Alex Tre-Black” host of “Black Jeopardy!,” with his verdict on Justin Bieber (“He ain’t grow”) and Robin Thicke (“Had that been me? I’d still be hittin’ that”).

**47**

## Jane Curtin

1975-1980



Curtin basically invented the role of the “disgruntled

*SNL* player who makes no attempt to hide that she’d rather be anywhere else on the planet right now.” There’s always a few of those – hell, some seasons it’s the entire cast. But for five years on *SNL* she had a thankless role – the token square surrounded by crazies – and her specialty was making it look *really* thankless.

**48**

## Tim Meadows

1991-2000



Whenever a former cast member came back to host, they’d make a

joke about how Meadows was *still* around. Because he always was – he hung around for 10 seasons. Give the man credit: He waited out some lean years, took every crummy part in every crummy sketch he could get, and finally found his niche as the Ladies’ Man: “I got my Courvoisier right here.”

**49**

## Darrell Hammond

1995-2009



The longest-running cast member (14 seasons!), entirely

because of his workmanlike facility with celeb impersonations. He did a pretty good Bill Clinton – but who didn’t? Hammond’s best (and most original) bit was his Sean Connery, whose pomposity might have helped inspire Ron Burgundy. (“Damn you and your daily doubles, you brigand!”) He’s back this season to replace Pardo.

**50**

## Nasim Pedrad

2009-2014



Always hovering below the radar, but a versatile

threat with a knack for portraying creepy kids: “I am all about candy. And if all I have to do to get said candy is hang out in a van, I am now all about vans!”

**51**

## Pamela Stephenson

1984-1985



A bright spot in a weak season, she came from Auckland via

London, serving as a New Wave ambassador with imitations of Billy Idol and Cyndi Lauper. Much of Stephenson’s humor involved her breasts; she quit showbiz to become a sex psychologist.

**52**

## Will Forte

2002-2010



It was always way too easy to take this laid-back gent for granted, especially after several dozen “MacGruber”s, but his spluttering hysteria in the

“Potato Chip” sketch – a NASA recruiter who cherishes all 35 of the chips on his desk – came from a dark and special place.

**53**

## Tracy Morgan

1996-2003



So much funnier on *30 Rock*. In fact, he was so great on *30*

*Rock*, his *SNL* stint now looks like one long setup.

**54**

## Lorne Michaels

1975-1980; 1985-present



Mysteriously, there’s no “Best of Lorne Michaels” DVD compila-

tion. But the boss is always a welcome presence whenever he shows up, and there aren’t many performers (or bosses) you can say that about over the course of a 40-year run. He wrote himself one of the debut season’s defining moments, offering the Beatles a check (“three *thousand* dollars!”) to reunite. He had no idea Lennon and McCartney were watching together at the Dakota.

**55**

## Jay Pharoah

2010-present



The Jimmy Fallon of 2 Chainz impressions.

**56**

## Paul Shaffer

1975-1980



Before he tickled America’s ivories every night with

Letterman, he was *SNL*’s swami of showbiz smarm. He was also the first cast member to drop an accidental f-bomb – in a sketch based on a Troggs bootleg – although few caught it.

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57

## Denny Dillon

1980-1981



The hidden gem of the doomed "Saturday Night Live

'80" replacement cast. Dillon had a great recurring bit as middle-aged yenta Pinky Waxman, hosting a talk show with her hubby, Leo (Gilbert Gottfried!). Was Pinky the first Jewish lady to say "Who knew?" on TV? Probably. Otherwise, Dillon got stuck in some of *SNL*'s worst sketches, most infamously the "Leather Weather Report," where she's a dominatrix meteorologist flogging Charles Rocket, who's strapped to a weather map of America.

58

## Horatio Sanz

1998-2006



Sanz always had that "contest winner" quality – he

looked like any random doofus from the audience who won a prize and got to climb onstage. He'll always be fondly remembered as one of the dorm slobbs in "Jarret's Room," showing off his bong to the 2001: *A Space Odyssey* theme: "Bong, bong, bong... BIG bong."



## Live From New York

Top: Thompson (left) with host Kevin Hart and Pharaoh as gluten-fearing victims of Brooklyn gentrification in the 40th season. Below: Michaels offers the Beatles three *thousand* dollars to reunite, 1976.

59

## Kevin Nealon

1986-1995



He got in way over his head when he took over "Weekend Update" ("I'm

Kevin Nealon, and that's news to me"), but otherwise he remained a dependable support player – especially as Tarzan to Lovitz's Tonto and Hartman's Frankenstein on "Succinctly Speaking."

60

## Nora Dunn

1985-1990



She had two specialties: hosting parody talk shows (particularly

as former model Pat Stevens) and teaming up with Jan

Hooks as the singing Sweeney Sisters. Their show-tune medleys were the kind of risky, cultish ladies'-night humor that could thrive on *SNL* in the transitional late 1980s, when Michaels returned and the franchise began its slow resurgence – just because nobody was watching and stakes were low.

61

## Garrett Morris

1975-1980



Nobody has explained how Morris landed in the original cast – he was a

Juilliard-trained theater guy, no comedian. He had trouble remembering lines, sometimes blanking out mid-sketch. And he had to act out the writers' hateful racist

62

## Beth Cahill

1991-1992



*SNL* really blew it letting this firecracker get away. Cahill had a

few show-stealing turns as Denise Swerski, Miss Southside of Chicago and daughter of George Wendt in the Bears "Superfan" skits. ("She's got a real Mrs. Ditka quality!") Whenever Cahill appeared, people asked, "Who the hell is she? And when is she coming back?" But she barely ever did, because (1) Victoria Jackson got all the blond-bimbo roles, and (2) *SNL* had nothing else for women to do.

63

## Tom Davis

1977-1980



The mellow half of Franken and Davis – his perpetual

college-stoner boyishness was a key part of the early show's identity. He always looked like one of the kids in the audience. He also did a killer Keith Richards imitation. Before he died of cancer in 2012, he wrote one of the best *SNL* memoirs, the excellently titled *39 Years of Short-Term Memory Loss*.

64-65

## The Two Nancys



Terry Sweeney  
1985-1986



Mary Gross  
1981-1985

*SNL*'s twin Nancy Reagans. Sweeney, the first out cast member, had an abrasive edge that sometimes hit the mark, and Gross was more polished – she also shone as Alfalfa and (especially) Mary Tyler Moore. Both were years ahead of their time.



**66**

## Joe Piscopo

1980-1984



The second banana to Eddie Murphy, which is like being the

second-most-famous dude in the Jimi Hendrix Experience. The Sinatra "I Love Rock 'N Roll" medley sure holds up, though.

**67**

## Brad Hall

1982-1984



The finest Pete Best impression in SNL history. Always likable

as the superpreppy "Update" news anchor, Hall has been married to Julia Louis-Dreyfus since 1987, which (1) earns him the Golden Sponge lifetime achievement award, and (2) must hold the record as SNL's all-time least-catastrophic romance.

**68**

## Michaela Watkins

2008-2009



She didn't stay long, but she made an impression as celebrity

blogger Angie Tempura from BitchPleeze.com.

**69**

## Ellen Cleghorne

1991-1995



The only black woman in the 1990s cast, except - what a shocker - she

never got any substantial roles to play. Her Queen Shaniaqua talk show wasn't enough to get her over. After SNL, she moved on to star in her own WB sitcom, the well-titled but ultimately doomed *Cleghorne!* And yet it seems appropriate that Cleghorne appeared in the opening credits on the sidewalk, trying to hail a taxi that never arrived.



### When Eddie Saved the Show

Murphy as Dion Dion with Piscopo's Sinatra, in 1983's "What Would Frank Do?" sketch.

**70**

## Rich Hall

1984-1985



Imported to do "Update" from his own HBO show, *Not Necessarily*

*the News*, which suited him better.

**71**

## Casey Wilson

2008-2009



A brief SNL pit stop on her way to deserved stardom in

*Happy Endings* and *Marry Me*. Who could forget her paralyzed stripper, Dusty Velvet? That sketch alone earns Wilson a spot north of the Jim Belushi Canyon.

**72**

## Jim Belushi

1983-1985



Consistent mediocrity is rare on SNL - it eventually crosses the line

into "grudgingly good" or "mega-irritating." He might

have been SNL's most reliable mediocrity, and as such he should be honored. He peaked as a blowhard bigot interviewing Louis-Dreyfus about Jewish culture in the talk show "Know Your Neighbor" ("Suppose my gas gauge is on empty, but I make it 40 miles to the Exxon station - can I get an eight-day holiday for that?") - a high point for both of them.

**73**

## Brooks Wheelan

2013-2014



Raised 10 bonus notches for his Twitter joke when he got the ax:

"Fired from New York, it's Saturday night!"

**74**

## Gail Matthius

1980-1981



A flicker of hope in the "Saturday Night Live '80" debacle, with a sharp Valley Girl mall-chick character named Vickie.

Matthius and Vickie both deserved better.

**75**

## Jenny Slate

2009-2010



SNL is already a footnote in her story - her superb film *Obvious Child*

dropped last year to wide acclaim. She had a rough first night - in a sketch where she said "frickin'" over and over (maybe not the smartest idea to toss at a rookie), she slipped and said "fuckin'." Seth Meyers gallantly put his arm around her for the "good nights," but it was her only season.

**76**

## Julia Sweeney

1990-1994



Sweeney spent most of her time playing Pat - a sniffling,

allegedly androgynous cretin - which was bad news for her and worse news for the rest of us. It's hard to think of a more universally dreaded recurring SNL character. (Pat was so feared by 1992 that it took only one cameo in a video for then-hot band Ugly Kid Joe to kill their career.)

**77-78**

## Untapped Talent



Michael McKean  
1994-1995



Harry Shearer  
1979-1980;  
1984-1985

Just filling in the *Spinal Tap* bingo card - neither David St. Hubbins nor Derek Smalls ever found his Stonehenge at 30 Rock.

**79**

## A. Whitney Brown

1986-1991



He did proto-*Daily Show* commentary during the Dennis Miller-era "Update,"

and later ended up on the beta *Daily Show* during the Craig Kilborn years.

80

## Abby Elliott

2008-2012



The first player to be the daughter of an ex-player, Chris Elliott, and the granddaughter of a guest, Bob Elliott of the legendary radio duo Bob and Ray. Damn good Sarah McLachlan impression.

81-92

## The New Kids



Noël Wells  
2013-2014



Beck Bennett  
2013-present



Tim Robinson  
2012-2013



Michael Che  
2014-present



Mike O'Brien  
2013-2014



Kyle Mooney  
2013-present



Leslie Jones  
2014-present



Colin Hanks  
2014-present



John Milhiser  
2013-2014



Sasheer Zamata  
2014-present



Pete Davidson  
2014-present



Aidy Bryant  
2012-present

The 2012-2015 rookies are a huge pileup of nervous kids, thrown into the cast and basically auditioning on the air. It's *SNL* as a reality-show

competition, where the prize is a gig at *SNL*. It'd be mean and unfair to rate them at this point, particularly since most would have to set themselves on fire to get onscreen. (A few are gone already.) Best of luck, gang. Remember, bombing on *SNL* is often the dawn of a beautiful career.

93

## Joan Cusack

1985-1986



Future Academy Award-nominated star in "year wasted not getting any love from *SNL*" shocker!

94-95

## The Zimmermans



Cheri Oteri  
1995-2000



Chris Kattan  
1996-2003

These two go together somehow, since they made a perfect couple as the Zimmermans. The ultimate theater kids, always trying so goddamn hard. They get full marks for originality – they were fearless in their pursuit of quirky characters. But they sure did repeat themselves (that Mango! those cheerleaders!), and they were in-

## Best Seasons

### 1. Season 3 1977-1978

The original Belushi/Aykroyd/Radner/Murray glory days. With samurai, nerds, killer bees, radioactive lobsters and ignorant sluts, every episode is a greatest-hits loop.

### 2. Season 17 1991-1992

The peak of the Hartman/Myers/Farley/Sandler era, rescuing a franchise that had looked DOA just a few years earlier.

### 3. Season 1 1975-1976

Chase dominates, but everyone makes it up as they

go along. The "comedy as rock & roll" principle only takes a handful of episodes for the format to click.

### 4. Season 4 1978-1979

The final days of Aykroyd and Belushi, as they get ready to bolt for Hollywood glory.

### 5. Season 18 1992-1993

Hartman's Bill Clinton takes over from Carvey's Bush and helps himself to some fries and pickles. Dizzy highs, embarrassing lows, tasteless excess – just what *SNL* should be.

## Worst Seasons

### 1. Season 6 1980-1981

The "Saturday Night Live '80" fiasco, after Michaels left.

### 2. Season 11 1985-1986

Michaels returns and finds out how tough it is to rebuild. The following season began with an announcement from Madonna: "*SNL* has asked me to read the following statement, concerning last year's entire season. It was all a dream. A horrible, horrible dream."

### 3. Season 21 1995-1996

The "Goat Boy" era. No other *SNL* slump looked

so much like the end of the line. So many tiresome one-note characters – those stupid Roxbury guys, those stupid cheerleaders.

### 4. Season 22 1996-1997

The "Jesus, More 'Goat Boy'?" era.

### 5. Season 20 1994-1995

The early-Nineties energy had burned out, ushering in a dry spell that lasted until Fey took the desk in 2000. You know you're in trouble when Garofalo's Martha Stewart impression is a highlight.

96

## Brian Doyle-Murray

1979-1982



More of a writer than a performer, Bill's big brother was still years away from his most memorable screen turn, in *Wayne's World*. ("He blows goats. I have proof.")

97

## Gary Kroeger

1982-1985



Well, *somebody* had to play Walter Mondale. Kroeger's other highlight: Donny Osmond to Louis-Dreyfus' Marie, as they sang a duet that turned into a full-on make-out session.

98

## Bobby Moynihan

2008-present



He's an uncle and he's drunk. Got it. Saving grace: His brilliant Chris Christie imitation.

99

## George Coe

1975-1976



The token old guy in the original cast, left behind when Michaels figured out it was funnier to dress young guys as old guys.

100

## Danitra Vance

1985-1986



*SNL*'s long history of failing to do right by black women begins here. (Well, it probably begins



with Garrett Morris as Tina Turner.) Vance got such shoddy treatment from the writers it became a joke in itself when she sang the Barry Manilow parody "I Play the Maids." She died in 1994.

101

## Sarah Silverman

1993-1994



Yeah, no surprise *SNL* had no clue what to do with her – she barely appeared in her entire season. For years afterward, she went abysmally wasted in Hollywood until finally she got famous by writing her own show, *Jesus Is Magic*, flaunting her distinctive "I was raped by a doctor, which is a bitter-sweet experience for a Jewish girl" humor. Best *SNL* rebound of all time!

102

## Janeane Garofalo

1994-1995



A comedy star with her own thriving career joins the cast of *SNL*. What could go wrong?

103

## Chris Elliott

1994-1995



Another comedy star with his own thriving career joins the cast of... wait, what the fuck was wrong with these people? They never heard of Randy Quaid?

104

## Mark McKinney

1994-1997



Another comedy star with his own... look, people. You're already famous. So stay the hell away from "SNL." It's a homeless shelter, not a spa. It's for lonesome newbies who

have no other hope. The *Billy Crystal Scenario* happened exactly once. You're so welcome!

105-110

## The Nineties One-Shots



Nancy Walls  
1995-1996



David Koechner  
1995-1996



Laura Kightlinger  
1994-1995



Morwenna Banks  
1994-1995



Fred Wolf  
1995-1997



Melanie Hutsell  
1991-1994

Mostly bit players trapped in the god-awful years after the big Myers/Hartman/Sandler exodus. The *SNL* equivalent of Marcy Playground or the Primitive Radio Gods.

111

## Siobhan Fallon

1991-1992



In her sole season, she snagged a three-second close-up in the credits – times 20 episodes, that's a solid minute, which must've been 90 percent of her screen time. Went on to play Björk's prison guard in a Lars von Trier film, proving anything is possible.

112

## Anthony Michael Hall

1985-1986



What a career of crazy highs and tremendous lows. What other actor on Earth could play Bill Gates, Whitey Ford and Mutt Lange? Going from *The Breakfast Club* to *SNL*

probably seemed like graduation, but it was more like a year of detention.

113

## Michael O'Donoghue

1975-1979



*National Lampoon's* evil genius helped define *SNL* behind the scenes – scripting nihilistic venom for Chevy Chase was like Robert Towne writing for Jack Nicholson. But he was no performer, so his onscreen "Mr. Mike" schtick – bearded stiff poses as a decadent dandy – has dated badly. And, sorry, but it's hard to take his "comedy is a baby-seal hunt" routine when you're looking right at that poignant cry-for-help baby seal of a comb-over.

114

## Damon Wayans

1985-1986



Before he blew up on *In Living Color*, he added his name to the "Briefly Sucked" files on *SNL*. Haaaated it!

115-120

## The Guy-2Ks



Jerry Minor  
2000-2001



Rob Riggle  
2004-2005



Finesse Mitchell  
2003-2006



Jeff Richards  
2001-2004



Paul Brittain  
2010-2012



Dean Edwards  
2001-2003

So many bros got lost in the shuffle in the 2000s.

121-123

## Eighties Ladies



Christine Ebersole  
1981-1982



Ann Risley  
1980-1981



Robin Duke  
1980-1984

Talented players who came and went without getting a real chance.

124-125

## More '80s Rejects



Dan Vitale  
1985-1986



Ben Stiller  
1988-1989

Officially cast members for a few weeks in the Eighties. Vitale was forgotten until Marc Maron dug him up for a *WTF* podcast. Stiller's whereabouts remain unknown.

126

## Tony Rosato

1980-1982



He went from being "the guy nobody noticed on *SCTV*" to "the guy nobody noticed on *SNL*," taking over the Joe Piscopo-type role whenever Piscopo needed a bathroom break.

127

## Charles Rocket

1980-1981



One of the saddest *SNL* crash-and-burn stories. Rocket had the misfortune to host "Weekend Update" during the doomed "Saturday Night Live '80" season, which meant he took most of the heat. His man-in-the-street "Rocket Report" segments were solid, but his "Update" got hammier and more off-key, and he got fired after saying "Who the fuck

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did it?" on the air, with a cocky grin on his face. He died tragically in 2005.

128-130

## The Temps



**Matthew Laurence**  
1980-1981



**Patrick Weathers**  
1980-1981



**Yvonne Hudson**  
1980-1981

Bit players in the "Saturday Night Live '80" replacement crew, which is like riding the bench for the Bad News Bears.

131

## Jay Mohr

1993-1995



Even in a crowded cast, Mohr still managed to stand out for his amazing "This asshole again?" power. His 2004 book, *Gasping for Airtime*, was an admirable chronicle of how inept he was on *SNL*.

132-133

## The One-Offs



**Laurie Metcalf**  
1980-1981



**Emily Prager**  
1980-1981

Like baseball's Moonlight Graham, they were cast members for one episode – without making it into any of the sketches. Rated leniently for not sucking.

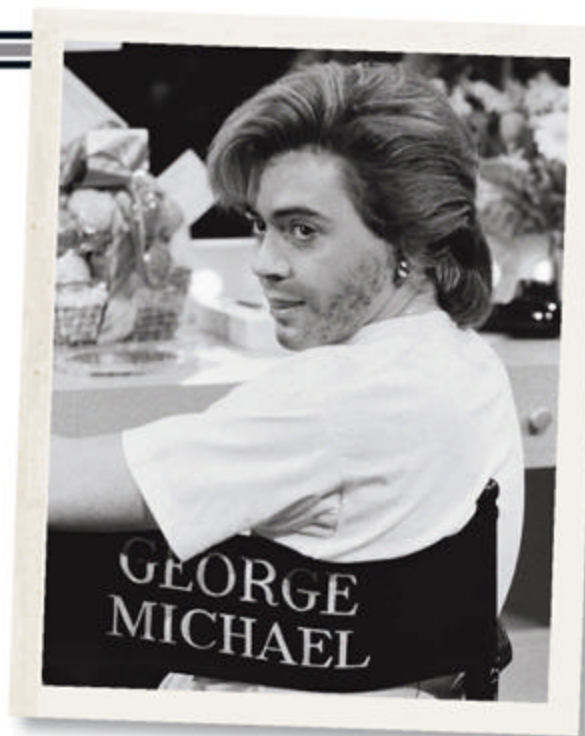
134

## Randy Quaid

1985-1986



Normally you can stick Randy Quaid into anything and make it funnier, but "normally" doesn't mean beans on *SNL*, especially not that Godfor-



## The Best Worst Ever

Downey Jr. stumbled badly on his single season of *SNL*. His highlight was a farting debate with Anthony Michael Hall.

saken 1985-1986 season. Let's just say, in the immortal words of Cousin Eddie: The shitter was full.

135

## Norm Macdonald

1993-1998



Macdonald clearly thought he was hilarious, and that counts for something – confidence is essential for a "Weekend Update" anchor. Unfortunately, he was just a Dennis Miller clone with no mullet and no jokes. Stare into the camera a little longer, Norm; maybe it'll get funnier.

136

## Colin Quinn

1995-2000



All the *Remote Control* alum needs for his comedy style is to hang out and be himself, yet *SNL* required him to wear a tie and read cue cards. "Weekend Update" was so spectacularly wrong for his skill set, especially his hoarser-by-the-minute croak, you

barely noticed how hackity-hackity the jokes were. Maybe that was the point.

137

## Gilbert Gottfried

1980-1981



It's so weird to think that Gottfried was ever young – or that he wasted a year of his youth bombing out on *SNL*. He wasn't really Gilbert Gottfried yet – he was just a morose-looking hippie kid with a 'fro that seemed to wilt by the minute. The best you can say for his *SNL* gig is it helped turn him into the bitter madman we know and love today.

138

## Victoria Jackson

1986-1992



America had six seasons to wonder how the one-joke, baby-talking ninny ate up so much time on *SNL*, and nobody ever did figure that out. The best thing VJ ever did was show up on the 25th-anniversary special as an audience

member and ask, "I was just wondering – whatever happened to me?"

139

## Jim Breuer

1995-1998



Like Jay Mohr, except more of a "This asshole again? No, that one" type.

140

## The Muppets

1975-1976



Strange but true: The Muppets were first-season cast members. But not the funny Muppets – a dark and grumpy version, starring a lizard named Scred. Jim Henson hated the "I'm Scred and you're not" gags. So he left to start *The Muppet Show*. Too bad – Gonzo and Belushi would have made quite a team.

141

## Robert Downey Jr.

1985-1986



Robert Downey Jr. is a comic genius. Making him unfunny stands as *SNL*'s most towering achievement in terms of sucking. How do you fuck up a sure thing like Downey? He's funny in anything. I mean, dude was funny in *Weird Science*. He was funny in *Johnny Be Good*. He was funny in *Iron Man*. But he met his Kryptonite, and it was *SNL*, where he spent the 1985-1986 season sucking up a storm. His greatest hit? A fart-noise debate with Anthony Michael Hall. In a perverse way, the Downey Fail sums up everything that makes *SNL* great. There are no sure things. No rules. No do-overs. No safety net – when you flop on *SNL*, you flop big. And that's the way it should be. The cameras roll at 11:30, ready or not. Live from New York – it's *Saturday Night*. 🍌



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# My Life in 15 Songs Ray Davies

Inside the Kinks frontman's Waterloo sunsets,  
celluloid heroes and other rock & roll fantasies

**By David Browne**

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**R**AY DAVIES CAN BE A HOMEBODY. "I DON'T do events well," he says from an office not far from his house in North London. He had mixed feelings about attending the recent West End premiere of *Sunny Afternoon*, a new musical devoted to the songs of the Kinks. "It was a great privilege," he says, "but I was inundated with cameras in my face." The evening brought back memories of the night in 1990 when the Kinks were inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame. "I nearly walked out I was so nervous," remembers Davies, who turned 70 last summer. "I walked around the block and came back for when we got the induction. I prefer to observe than be observed."

Those observations, combined with his brother Dave Davies' unstoppable riffs, have built one of rock's greatest bodies of work, from 1964's "You Really Got Me" to 1978's "A Rock 'n' Roll Fantasy." You can hear the Kinks' influence in everything from hard rock and metal (a point that was underlined when Ray got onstage with Metallica in 2009) to punk and Brit-pop acts like Blur, who were inspired by the brothers' unapologetic Englishness.

The story of the Kinks is also one of strife and missed opportunities: The band lost four prime years when it was banned from playing America from 1965 to 1969 after a falling-out with the musicians' union. Ray

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Davies in the  
mid-Seventies



has at times battled depression, suffering a nervous breakdown at 21. And he and Dave have feuded for decades; Dave recently described their relationship as often “toxic.” The Kinks split in 1996, but Ray has kept writing songs and releasing solo albums. (He’s currently at work on a new one, which he says draws from his 2013 memoir, *Americana*.)

But his old band still beckons. A few weeks ago, Ray called on longtime Kinks drummer Mick Avory for help with one of his new tunes. “I was having a difficult time with a rhythmic shift in a song, so I took Mick in the studio for two or three hours to work out some ideas with him,” Ray says. “And he’s still playing well.” A new five-CD box set, *The Kinks: The Anthology, 1964–71*, shows off the band’s dazzling first era, and discussions are on the table for possible Kinks shows or even recordings.

“It would be a shame if Ray and I didn’t do something [in 2015],” Dave said last year. “But I don’t want it to be a Ray Davies show where he lets his little brother stand in the corner. It has to be done respectfully.” Says Ray, “I’ll make it happen one day.” In the meantime, he took a couple of hours to talk about these career milestones.

## You Really Got Me 1964

When I was an art student in college, I used to play in clubs in Soho in London, with mainstream jazz bands. I remember the bandleader said, “If you can’t do a solo, just riff along with the rest of us.” So riffs became a prevalent feature in my playing. The riffs created the sound.

I wrote the basic riff and melody of “You Really Got Me” before I joined the Kinks. I was fascinated by watching girls dancing in clubs, and I just remembered this one girl dancing. Sometimes you’re so overwhelmed by the presence of another person and you can’t put two words together.

We had two flops before this, and the record company didn’t think “You Really Got Me” was worthy of recording, but they allowed us to do it as a last throw of the die. We wanted it to sound distorted and powerful without being too loud. We evolved the sound through sticking knitting needles in the speakers. Dave claims to have cut the speaker with a razor blade.

Lo and behold, it became a massive hit. And if you hear “You Really Got Me” today, it’s not overwhelming like heavy metal. It still has a jazz-blues vibe to it. It stands the test of time.

## Tired of Waiting for You 1965

I was still toying with the idea of going back to art school, but I’d written a Number One single that was doing well all

over the world, and people said, “You must know how to do this.”

So now the Kinks were recording our first couple of albums and I was running out of ideas – we did about 50 percent covers on the first one. Then I remembered “Tired of Waiting for You,” which I had written in college. We put the backing track down late in the day, but I couldn’t remember the words. I had a cold, so I said, “Can I go home and get cold medicine to do the vocal?” I wrote the lyrics the next day on the train journey in and went into the studio and recorded them. Just a moment of recklessness. And in America, it turned out to be a bigger hit than “You Really Got Me.”

## Till the End of the Day 1965

I had just had my first child with my wife, who was a year or two younger than me. I was being overwhelmed by family. I didn’t go to clubs or anything. My manager thought I’d dried up, and I was quite depressed and strung out. A songwriter named Mort Shuman, who had written with Doc Pomus, told me not to try so hard and enjoy life. So, after a few days off, I came back and thought, “I’ve got to make everybody think I’m OK.” So my first rhyme was, “Baby, I feel good.” And then, “From the moment I rise, feel good from morning till the end of the day.” Which was a total lie.

## Where Have All the Good Times Gone 1965

My family would get around the piano and sing songs, and I wanted to write a song my dad or relatives could sing. They always talked about how great it was before or during the war – I think every generation thinks that way. I remember sitting in the car with my dad, and he said, “You’re writing for an old person, I can see that.” So it worked to that degree. This is still a powerful song to play. It’s got that hard edge the Kinks had, but at the same time, it’s got a reflective, poignant lyric. I was thrilled with the Van Halen version. They took it up a step.

## Sunny Afternoon 1966

This came at a really difficult time. I was very overwhelmed with work and insecurity – going through all the things 21-year-olds go through. Before that was recorded, the Kinks actually did a tour of Europe without me. We were caught up in lawsuits, and our money was being frozen. We didn’t have any money for the taxman

to take. While I was recovering, I started writing those descending notes and putting this melody together. I surrendered myself and created an alter ego for this song. The vocal has a sort of innocent purity to it, which is a man slurring his words around a microphone, finding his way in the world. The backing vocals were brilliantly sung by [bassist] Pete Quaife, Dave and my then-wife, Rasa. It was a great feeling when it got to Number One, partly because it knocked the Beatles’ “Paperback Writer” off the top of the charts. It was a magical moment. It lifted me for a while.

## Waterloo Sunset 1967

Mick and Dave, particularly, didn’t get what I was writing about; I didn’t show the band the lyrics until I stood up to the microphone. This was a romantic, lyrical song about my older sister’s generation. Maybe the love of her life, walking into the future, crossing the bridge. “Terry” and “Julie” were big, famous actors at the time. It was that generation that survived World War II. All my sisters were adults, and I had took onboard a lot of their generation’s culture and music – the big bands, the dance bands. It had an effect on me.

On the new box set, one of the outtakes is “Waterloo Sunset” without the vocal on it.

The poetry is in the backing track. You can have a great song with great lyrics and great singing, but if the track isn’t connected to it in some way, the song doesn’t work.

## This Time Tomorrow 1970

We couldn’t perform in America for three and a half years. We missed Woodstock, the Monterey festival, all those things. Woodstock would’ve been fun, but I can imagine what the toilets were like. I stayed at home and wrote songs about England, which put me on a different journey.

The last gig we played before we were banned was the Hollywood Bowl, and when we came back, after the ban, we were

playing a 200-seater club. I wrote “This Time Tomorrow” on an airplane coming back from America after that trip. The song is about going into the unexpected, unexplored territory. What does the future hold for us? It’s an underrated song.

## Lola 1970

It was a great achievement when we finally came back and had another hit with “Lola” and regained our status. “Lola” was

“We missed Woodstock, all that. I stayed home and wrote songs about England.”

Contributing editor DAVID BROWNE wrote about Bob Dylan in November.



refer to Elvis Presley dying: "The King is dead, rock is done. You might be through, but I've just begun." This great innovator has passed away, but the cause will go on.

### (Wish I Could Fly Like) Superman

1979

Studio 54 was near where I used to stay in New York. Interesting place, but I didn't go there that often. I danced once. That's the good thing about disco: There's no contact when you dance. I made this record almost as a joke – not as a joke, but to see how it went over with Clive Davis at Arista. We sent it over, and he raved about it. It's a very political song about people going on strike. It was our take on a disco groove, but it had more groove than disco, a little bit rock & roll. We went to lots of discos to make sure it was the right groove, and the kids loved it.

### Give the People What They Want

1981

To me, this song was the pinnacle of our climb to success with Arista. It sounds like it should be heard from the back rows in Madison Square Garden. We put corrugated iron around the walls of our studio, Konk, to give the drum that tremendous thud. The album is almost a protest record about the perils of success. The lyrics are pretty graphic: "Oswald shot Kennedy.... Still we watch the reruns again and again." It was the beginning of celebrity culture, the obsession the media has with violence and suffering. Happiness is rarely celebrated.

### Come Dancing 1983

"Come Dancing" is about the changes in the big-band era and was inspired by one of my sisters, who died in a ballroom on my 13th birthday. She went dancing and died of a heart attack when she was 31. There's a lot of me in that song. The label wasn't sure about it. They felt the singing and the melody was "adult rock." Julien Temple and I contrived this video, and it was one of our biggest hits in America – which was amazing, since I sang it in a real London accent.

### Working Man's Café 2007

I went to see my brother Dave in the town of Exeter. I said, "Where are you?" and he said, "In the cafe around the corner." I said, "OK, I'll phone you when I get there." That lyric is in the song. There's also a really telling line: "I thought I knew you then, but will I know you now?"

It's a song about changes in the world. The idea started in a shopping mall in Europe, which might as well have been in Poughkeepsie. But within that shopping mall, I still found my brother, and we had a nice lunch that day, a nice chat. The Kinks will raise their head again, no doubt. I still don't see the writing on the wall.

## 20th Century Men

Above: Pete Quaife, Ray Davies, Mick Avory and Dave Davies (from left), in 1965. "I was depressed and strung out," says Ray. "I thought, 'I've got to make everybody think I'm OK.'" Left: Ray in 2012. "The Kinks will raise their head again, no doubt."



a love song, and the person they fall in love with is a transvestite. It's not their fault – they didn't know – but you know it's not going to last. It was based on a story about my manager.

### 20th Century Man 1971

I imagined this man demolishing a row of houses, like the one that's on the interior of the *Muswell Hillbillies* album. This 20th-century man shuts himself in with dynamite, locks his doors and is not going to give up to anybody. I put myself in a mindset like a Method actor to write the song. It's not a deliberate attempt to make a pop record. It's kind of undersung in this deep, nonpenetrating voice, and it's just me wanting to make a statement. I still play it onstage, and I still have the energy. Another century's been and gone, but it can apply to now as well.

### Celluloid Heroes 1972

The Kinks had a comeback in the States in the late Sixties and early Seventies. When I was in Los Angeles, I used to stay at a hotel a block away from the Walk of Fame. The difference between success and failure, literally side by side, has always fascinated me. "Celluloid Heroes"

wasn't destined to be a hit. The intro was about a minute long, and it doesn't get to the punchline until five and a half minutes into the song. But I wanted to set it up adequately. I remember playing it for my daughter for the first time. She was two or three years old and crawling around on the floor, and she looked up as if to say, "It's all right, Dad." When that chorus kicks in, I still get a chill when I sing it.

### A Rock 'n' Roll Fantasy 1978

My brother wanted to leave the band around this time. Dave's personal life was probably in slight chaos then; he probably had an ultimatum from home, like, "Don't tour too much." The bass player and the keyboard player both announced they didn't want to make another record after *Misfits*. The song was almost a homage to them; if you listen to the lyrics, it's about someone leaving the band because they've given up the cause, and the two brothers will find a way through this.

As I was writing it, it was announced that Elvis Presley died. I was staying in New York at the time, and I looked out the window at about five in the morning, and there was one light on in a building, and that became the character Dan the Fan. I



# The Pentagon & Climate Change

The leaders of our armed forces know what's coming next: melting ice caps, rising sea levels, and mass migrations that will take a toll on much of our military infrastructure and create countless new threats. But climate deniers in Congress are ignoring the warnings and putting our national security at risk

*By* **JEFF GOODELL**

*Illustration by* **MATT MAHURIN**





**N**AVAL STATION NORFOLK IS THE headquarters of the U.S. Navy's Atlantic fleet, an awesome collection of military power that is in a terrible way the crowning glory of American civilization. Seventy-five thousand sailors and civilians work here, their job the daily business of keeping an armada spit-shined and ready for deployment at any moment. When I visited in December, the aircraft carrier *USS Theodore Roosevelt*

was in port, a 1,000-foot-long floating war machine that was central to U.S. military operations in Iraq and Afghanistan. Cranes loaded equipment onto the deck; sailors rushed up and down the gangplanks. Navy helicopters hovered overhead. Security was tight everywhere. While I was checking out one of the base's massive new double-decker concrete piers that's nearly as big as a shopping-mall parking lot, I wandered over to have a closer look at the *USS Gravelly*, a guided-missile destroyer that has spent a lot of hours on watch in the Mediterranean. Armed men on the deck watched me warily – even my official escort seemed jittery (“I think we should step back a bit,” he said, grabbing my arm).

You can't spend 10 minutes in this part of Virginia without feeling the deep sense of history. The Battle of Hampton Roads, a famous naval showdown between two Civil War ironclads, occurred just offshore. The base was a key departure point for thousands of sailors during World War II, many of whom never returned. Their ghosts still haunt the place. Everyone's aunt or uncle has a story to tell about a night in a port in Brisbane or Barcelona or about the way their ears rang the first time they heard a cannon firing from the deck of a ship.

But within the lifetime of a child growing up here, all this could vanish into the Atlantic Ocean. The land that the base is built upon is literally sinking, meaning sea levels are rising in Norfolk roughly twice as fast as the global average. There is no high ground, nowhere to retreat. It feels like a swamp that has been dredged and paved over – and that's pretty much what it is. All it takes is a rainstorm and a big tide and the Atlantic invades the base – roads are submerged, entry gates impassable. A nor'easter had moved through the area the day before my visit. On Craney Island, the base's main refueling depot, military vehicles were up to their axles in seawater. Water pooled in a long, flat grassy area near Admiral's Row, where naval commanders live in magnificent houses built for the 1907 Jamestown Exposition. “It's the biggest Navy base in the world, and it's going to have to be relocated,” says former Vice President Al Gore. “It's just a question of when.”

There are 29 other military bases, shipyards and installations in the area, and

many of them are in just as much trouble. At nearby Langley Air Force base, home to two fighter wings and headquarters for the Air Combat Command, base commanders keep 30,000 sandbags ready to stack around buildings when a big storm comes in. At Dam Neck, another Navy base, they pile old Christmas trees on the beach to keep it from eroding. At NASA Wallops Flight Facility, NASA armored the shoreline with 3 million cubic yards of sand to protect its launchpads from sea surges. “Military readiness is already being impacted by sea-level rise,” says Virginia Sen. Tim Kaine, who mentions that with all the flooding, it's becoming difficult to sell a house in some parts of Norfolk. If the melting of Greenland and West Antarctica continues to accelerate at current rates, scientists say Norfolk could see more than

seven feet of sea-level rise by 2100. In 25 years, operations at most of these bases are likely to be severely compromised. Within 50 years, most of them could be goners. If the region gets slammed by a big hurricane, the reckoning could come even sooner. “You could move some of the ships to other bases or build new, smaller bases in more protected places,” says retired Navy Capt. Joe Bouchard, a former commander of Naval Station Norfolk. “But the costs would be enormous. We're talking hundreds of billions of dollars.”

Rear Adm. Jonathan White, the Navy's chief oceanographer and head of its climate-change task force, is one of the most knowledgeable people in the military about what's actually happening on our rapidly heating planet. Whenever another officer or a congressperson corners White and presses him about why he spends so much time thinking about climate change, he doesn't even try to explain thermal expansion of the oceans or ice dynamics in the Arctic. “I just take them down to Norfolk,” White says. “When you see what's going on down there, it gives you a sense of what climate change means to the Navy – and to America. And you can see why we're concerned.”

**T**HOSE WHO TALK MOST about climate change – scientists, politicians, environmental activists – tend to frame the discussion in economic and moral terms. But last month, in a dramatic turn, President Obama talked about climate change in an explicitly military context: “The Pentagon says that climate change poses immediate risks to our national security,” he said in his State of the Union address. “We should act like it.”

On one level, this is just shrewd politics, a way of talking about climate change to people who don't care about extinction rates among reptiles or food prices in eastern Africa. But it's also a way of boxing in all the deniers in Congress who have blocked climate action – many of whom, it turns out, are big supporters of the military. The Senate Armed Services Committee is made up of characters like James Inhofe of Oklahoma, Ted Cruz of Texas and Jeff Sessions of Alabama, and is headed by John McCain of Arizona, who, before he ran for president in 2008, had been an outspoken advocate for climate action, but has been silent on the issue in recent years. The House Armed Services Committee is now chaired by Rep. Mac Thornberry of Texas, who argued in a 2011 op-ed that prayer is a better response to heat waves and drought than cutting carbon pollution.

Any official who draws a link between climate change and national security is guaranteed a rabid reaction from right-

**The future of crucial military bases, many of them irreplaceable due to their geography or strategic location, is in question.**

JEFF GOODELL is writing a book about the impact of global sea-level rise.



### Port in a Storm

Aircraft carriers in port at Naval Station Norfolk, America's largest naval base (above). Below: As sea levels rise, floods have become more common on the base.



wingers. Outgoing Secretary of Defense Chuck Hagel recently called climate change “a threat multiplier” that “has the potential to exacerbate many of the challenges we are dealing with today – from infectious disease to terrorism.” In response, *The Wall Street Journal* editorial page blasted Hagel as a delusional tree-hugger: “Americans who might die at the hands of the Islamic State won’t care that Mr. Hagel is mobilizing against melting glaciers.” In a speech in Jakarta last year – a city of almost 30 million that is sinking rapidly – Secretary of State John Kerry called climate change “perhaps the world’s most fearsome weapon of mass destruction” and likened it to terrorism, epidemics and poverty. McCain immediately dismissed Kerry’s concerns and accused him of “butterflying around the world, saying all kinds of things”; former Republican leader Newt Gingrich tweeted, “Every American who cares about national security must demand Kerry’s resignation. A delusional secretary of state is dangerous to our safety.”

Before climate change became taboo for Republicans, it was possible for even conservative politicians to have rational discussions about the subject. In 2003, under Donald Rumsfeld, former President George W. Bush’s defense secretary, the Pentagon published a report titled “An Abrupt Climate Change Scenario and Its Implications for United States National Security.” Commissioned by Andrew Marshall, who is sometimes jokingly referred to within the Pentagon as Yoda – and who was a favorite of Rumsfeld’s – the report

warned that threats to global stability posed by rapid warming vastly eclipse that of terrorism. Some of the climate science in the report was flawed, but the broader conclusions were not. “Disruption and conflict will be endemic features of life,” the report stated. “Once again, warfare would define human life.”

Even McCain, now firmly in the denial camp, didn’t hesitate to draw the connection between climate change and national security. “If the scientists are right and temperatures continue to rise,” he said on the Senate floor in 2007, “we could face environmental, economic and national-security consequences far beyond our ability to imagine.”

This kind of talk vanished from the party after 2008, when the GOP turned into a subsidiary of Koch Industries. Since then, Republicans have worked hard to

undermine any connection between climate and national security. Case in point: In 2009, then-CIA director Leon Panetta quietly started the Center on Climate Change and National Security. It was a straightforward attempt by the intelligence community to gather a better understanding of the changes to come. Among other things, the Center funded a major study of the relationships between climate change and social stress, under the auspices of the National Academy of Sciences, one of the most respected scientific organizations in the country. Climate deniers in Congress didn’t like it, especially Republican John Barrasso of Wyoming, a Big Coal state. By the time the report was completed, Panetta had left the CIA and his successor, Gen. David Petraeus, let it wither. “We felt constant pressure to water down our conclusions,” says one of the co-authors of the National Academy report. The day the report was released, the press conference was suddenly canceled, and the report was buried. A few weeks later, the Center on Climate Change and National Security was disbanded.

Barrasso has also been a key figure in derailing Senate hearings on the connection between climate and national security. Last year, Daniel Chiu, one of the Pentagon’s top strategists, testified intelligently about the national-security implications of climate change. But in the Q&A period that followed, Barrasso disappeared into fantasyland, quizzing Chiu about “global international crime syndicates” that are manipulating European environmental policies “to aid and support



terrorist organizations and drug cartels that wish to do us and our allies harm.”

Deniers in Congress have gone after the Pentagon where military officials feel it most: their budget. Last year, House Republicans tagged an amendment onto the defense appropriations bill that prohibited the Pentagon from spending any money implementing recommendations from the latest report of the U.N. Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change. “The amendment had no effect on the defense budget, since the IPCC’s recommendations don’t really apply to us,” one Pentagon insider told me. “But the intent was clear: This is going to be war.”

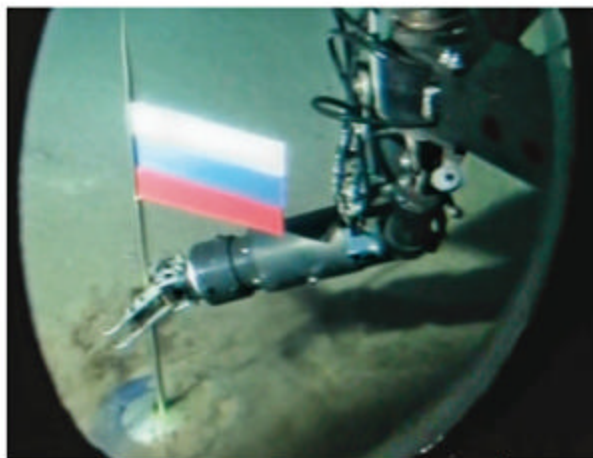
**T**HE SCALE OF MILITARY assets that are at risk due to our rapidly changing climate is mind-boggling. The Pentagon manages more than 555,000 facilities and 28 million acres of land – virtually all of which will be impacted by climate change in some way.

Nearly every naval and Air Force base on the East Coast is vulnerable to sea-level rise and storm surges, including Eglin Air Force Base, the largest Air Force base in the United States, which is on the low-lying Florida Panhandle, and Patrick Air Force Base on Florida’s Atlantic Coast. In the West, the problem is often drought and flash flooding. Fort Irwin, a seven-square-mile Army base in Southern California, on the edge of the Mojave Desert, has troubles with both. California’s epic drought has put the base’s long-term water supply into question. Fort Irwin is one of the only bases in the U.S. with the space and the isolation to allow full-scale mock tank warfare. At the same time, the base has been pounded by extreme rain events. In August 2013, when a year’s worth of rain fell in 80 minutes, flooding caused \$64 million in damages on the base.

Up in Alaska, the problem is thawing permafrost and coastal erosion from stronger storms and higher tides. The Air Force’s early-warning radar installations, which help the U.S. keep a close watch on anything lobbed our way from North Korea or Russia, have been hit particularly hard. At one installation, 40 feet of shoreline have been lost, endangering the reliability of the radar. At other installations, thawing permafrost has caused the radar to tilt and fall out of alignment.

In some places, these impacts are little more than expensive nuisances. But in others, the future of entire installations, many of them virtually irreplaceable due to their geography and strategic location, is in question. The U.S. naval

base on Diego Garcia, a small coral atoll in the Indian Ocean, like the nearby Maldives, is sure to vanish. Built during the Cold War, Diego Garcia gave the U.S. military a footing from which to counter Soviet influence in the region, as well as to protect shipping lanes out of the Middle East. In more recent years, this rare strategic asset has become a crucial logistics hub for sending supplies to joint forces in the Middle East, the Mediterranean and Southern Europe. It also houses Air Force Satellite Control Network equipment used to control GPS. The ships and



## Land-grabbing in the Arctic

In 2007, a Russian sub planted its country’s flag on the Arctic seabed. Melting ice caps have opened up a new ocean in the resource-rich region that the U.S. is ill-equipped to protect.

equipment can be moved easily enough, but giving up a military foothold in a vital but flammable part of the world is not something the military likes to do. “To the Navy, presence matters,” says retired Rear Adm. David Titley.

The Pentagon is examining its 704 coastal installations and sites in a big study to try to figure out which bases are most at risk. Eventually some tough decisions will have to be made about which ones to close, relocate or protect. Even speculating about the number of possible closures is too hot a topic for anyone in the Pentagon to touch right now. But the process can’t be put off much longer. The next meeting of the Base Realignment and Closure Commission could occur as soon as 2017. “In BRAC, all of the decisions are based on the military value,” says John Conger, the deputy undersecretary of defense, who is responsible for BRAC. “Will climate change affect the military value of the installation? Well, sure it will. The question is, does it dominate the equation? And I don’t think it does – yet.”

Just as there are climate-change hot spots, there are also climate-denial hot

spots – and Virginia is one of them. The Republican-dominated Virginia General Assembly has been hostile to discussion of climate change – one legislator called sea-level rise “a left-wing term.” Instead, the politically acceptable phrase in Virginia is “recurrent flooding.”

This makes it hard for the Navy to deal with the most immediate problem Norfolk faces: keeping its roads open. One study by the Virginia Institute for Marine Science identified nearly 300 miles of flood-vulnerable roads in the Norfolk area. “If people can’t get to work on the base because the roads are flooded out, we have a big problem,” says Capt. J. Pat Rios, who is in charge of Navy facilities in the mid-Atlantic region. But roads in Norfolk are the state’s responsibility, and rebuilding them is not a priority right now. Because a number of the men and women in the Virginia Legislature don’t believe climate change is an urgent issue, they don’t want to spend much money addressing the threat it poses. “They find roads to fix in other parts of the state,” says Joe Bouchard.

For now, the Navy’s strategy is just to buy time. In the late 1990s, Navy engineers realized that the 13 piers at the base, some dating back to World War II, were reaching the end of their life spans. Because they had been built at a time when nobody gave a thought to sea-level rise, the piers were relatively low to the water. At high tide, the utilities that ran along the underside of the pier decks – electrical, steam, phone, Internet – were often immersed in water, rendering them unusable. “It was not a nuisance problem – it was not a minor operational issue,” says Bouchard. “Sea-level rise was interfering with combat readiness for the Atlantic fleet.”

So far, four new piers have been built, which are higher, stronger and better-designed than the old piers. Bouchard, who was commander while the first new piers were constructed, says “they were built with sea-level rise in mind.” But out on the base, nobody wants to talk directly about spending money to deal with sea-level rise, mostly because they are worried about drawing scrutiny from climate deniers in Congress, who are happy to red-line any expenditure with the word “climate” in it. Instead, many people in the military end up talking about the climate similar to the way eighth-graders talk about sex – with code words and suggestive language.

“We didn’t raise the piers because of climate change,” Capt. Rios tells me during my visit to the base. He doesn’t quite wink, but almost.

# Flashpoints in a Warming World

Climate change will accelerate threats and greatly hinder our ability to respond to them

## Bering Strait

This 50-mile-wide body of water separating the U.S. and Russia will become a strategic and economic choke point, akin to the highly militarized Strait of Hormuz. Currently, the U.S. Navy has no significant presence here.

## The Arctic

The next battleground of super-power conflict. The opening of ice-free sea lanes through the High North will cut shipping times between Asia and Europe by a third, which will revolutionize global trade. The U.S., China and Russia are already vying for control of Arctic ports, not to mention the region's vast oil and mineral wealth.

## Pakistan

Described by the World Bank as "one of the most water-stressed countries in the world." Water shortages, drought and flooding are already causing social unrest. Pakistan increasingly relies on water from the Indus River, which originates in India, ratcheting up tensions between these bitterly mistrustful nuclear powers.

## Bangladesh

Widely seen as the nation most threatened by climate change. By 2050, 17 percent of the nation's landmass could be underwater, displacing some 18 million people.

## Philippines

In the wake of 2013's Typhoon Haiyan, which killed 6,300 and dislocated 4.1 million more, the U.S. mounted a massive relief operation. As climate change produces more and bigger storms, such operations will increasingly tax our military resources and readiness.

## Northern Mexico

As drought and famine persist in the world's most impoverished areas, already-fragile governments will weaken, if not collapse entirely. Our first brush with famine-motivated mass migration could come from our southern border, where a historic drought is already causing food shortages.

## Africa

Climate change is undermining food security across the continent, increasing the risk of conflicts and instability. Nine African nations are considered to be at "extreme risk" of food shortages. In Nigeria, flash flooding and droughts have dislocated millions, spurring the rise of murderous quasi-political organizations like Boko Haram.

## Iraq and Syria

Long-term drought, which has forced nearly a million Syrian farmers and herders from their land, is a key driver of that country's civil war – as well as larger regional conflicts. ISIS exercises its power in part from seizing and controlling water supplies, setting a dangerous precedent that other terrorist organizations will surely emulate.

"Then why did you raise them?" I ask. "Because we needed new piers. And as long as we were building them, it didn't cost much more to build them higher."

But building higher piers is not going to save the base in Norfolk. No matter how much money the Pentagon spends, it won't matter if people can't get to the base because roads are underwater or nobody wants to live in the area because the value of their homes is spiraling down. "To save the base, you have to save the region," says Bouchard. With the help of the White House, state and local officials recently set up an innovative two-year pilot project with the Navy to begin to address these problems. But right now, solutions are a long way off.

SEA-LEVEL RISE IS ONLY ONE OF the climate-driven threats that are making the world more dangerous and volatile. Drought contributed to the escalating food prices that triggered the Arab Spring revolt in Egypt, in 2011; it also helped trigger the civil war in Syria. In northern Nigeria, a region destabilized by extreme cycles of drought and flooding, Boko Haram is terrorizing villages and killing thousands of Nigerians.

Climate change is also reshaping the boundaries of the continents. Nowhere more so than in the Arctic, which is likely to become a major flashpoint in the territorial disputes and resource wars of the future. "The melting ice is opening a new

ocean," says Adm. Gary Roughead, who was U.S. chief of naval operations from 2007 to 2011. "It's a once-in-a-millennium event." Thirteen percent of the world's undiscovered petroleum lies beneath the Arctic, as does 30 percent of the undiscovered natural gas and more than \$1 trillion of mineral wealth. "The best way I've heard it explained," says Rear Adm. Daniel Abel of the U.S. Coast Guard, "imagine if you have the Panama Canal and Saudi Arabia's worth of energy show up at the same place in your area of responsibility. How would you embrace that?"

You can already see glimpses of a militarized future in the Arctic. In 2007, Russian soldiers dived 14,000 feet beneath the North Pole in a minisub and plant-



ed a Russian flag in the seabed, marking it as their turf. “This isn’t the 15th century – you can’t go around the world and just plant flags” to claim territory, Canada’s minister of foreign affairs, Peter MacKay, said dismissively. Last September, six Russian jet fighters were detected near Alaska; when U.S. and Canadian fighters intercepted the Russian planes about 55 miles off the coast – still outside of American airspace, but closer than they usually fly – the Russians turned around and headed home, but it was a close encounter and one that has been happening with increasing frequency in recent months. In November, a Russian sub in the Barents Sea near Greenland test-fired a Bulava intercontinental missile – the Bulava is Russia’s latest and most deadly nuclear weapon. The missile has a range of about 5,000 miles and can be loaded with up to 10 nuclear warheads, each of which can be individually maneuvered. A Bulava launched from a sub in the Arctic could easily reach Boston, New York or Washington, D.C.

Within the Pentagon, these provocations were seen as more than old Cold War game-playing. In the eyes of some planners, Putin was sending a not-very-subtle message that he thinks of the Arctic the same way Americans once thought of the West: a vast, uncivilized landscape of resources that will be dominated by whomever stakes the first claim.

After the Cold War, the U.S. military largely forgot about the Arctic. It was too hostile, too forbidding, too expensive to operate there, and without the Soviets to worry about, there was little reason to. In the 1990s, as Big Oil developed plans to explore the region for oil and gas, the Navy’s concern grew – Roughead says a big blowout on an offshore drilling rig in the Arctic “would make Deepwater Horizon look like a cakewalk.” But given the complexities of drilling in the Arctic, that seemed like a distant-future threat.

Naval leaders began to think differently about the region in 2007, which, when the history of climate change is written, will go down as one of the turning points. That summer, scientists were stunned by an unexpected vanishing of sea ice that exposed 1 million square miles of open water – six Californias – beyond the average since satellites started measurements in 1979. Roughead assembled a special Navy task force to figure out what was going on. “I wanted to really understand the long-term trends so we could begin to think strategically about the challenges we might face in the Arctic, and what we needed to operate up there,” Roughead says. “The idea was to be more thoughtful about this than to just run around the Pentagon shouting, ‘Hey, everybody, climate change is a big deal!’”

Navy scientists estimate that by 2025 the summer ice melt in the Arctic will be

big enough to allow transpolar shipping to expand on the Northern Sea Route, which passes through the Barents Sea along the Russian coastline and cuts the transit time between Asia and Europe by a third. As the ice thaws, there will be more tourists sailing in the Northwest Passage along the Canadian coast. There will be more drilling in the Chukchi Sea west of Alaska. There will be more traffic to Greenland, where mining companies are already lining up to extract minerals that will be made accessible by the retreating ice sheets. With all this new maritime traffic, it’s inevitable that the Navy will have to respond to more and more incidents up there, from search-and-rescue missions to possibly countering the ag-

**Republicans in Congress have made clear that any item in the Pentagon budget that mentions the word “climate” is going to set off alarm bells.**

gressive actions of the Russian navy. Or, nearly as likely, from the Chinese, who are eager to tap into the rich oil and gas reserves in the Arctic. “The U.S. Navy doesn’t cede an ocean to anybody,” Titley argues. “We are a great power.”

But the U.S. Navy is also, according to Roughead, “woefully unprepared” to operate in the icy, unforgiving Arctic. The Navy doesn’t have good weather-forecasting ability there; satellite communications are unreliable; only about 10 percent of the seabed has been surveyed, so navigators are unaware of undersea obstacles. Submarine missions have also become more dangerous due to unpredictable sea ice-freezing patterns. Most important, because nobody in the Navy was prioritizing the need to operate in the Arctic, few Navy ships are prepared for cold weather. Their water and ventilation systems don’t work properly in freezing temperatures, their hulls are not hardened against ice. As Titley puts it, “Every Navy commander’s nightmare is that something happens in the Arctic – a ship full of tourists going down, a terrorist attack,

an encounter with Russian military – and having to pick up the phone and say, ‘I’m sorry, Mr. President. We’d like to do something about this, but we simply don’t have the equipment to allow us to respond to the situation.’”

When it comes to safety and security in the Arctic, no piece of equipment is as important as an icebreaker. Virtually every nation with a claim to the Arctic knows this: Russia has 43 icebreakers (six of them nuclear-powered); Canada has 13; Finland has nine. The U.S. has one, the *Polar Star*, which is operated by the U.S. Coast Guard. It’s nearly 40 years old. Within a decade, it will be scrapped, and there are no plans to build another one. “By not funding them,” says Titley, “we telegraph to the rest of the world that we don’t care about the Arctic.”

The price tag for a new icebreaker is \$1 billion – not cheap, but about one-third the price of a destroyer. And not something Rep. Duncan Hunter, the San Diego climate denier who chairs the House subcommittee that oversees Coast Guard affairs, wants to hear about. (Although he does seem to be in favor of an ice-free Arctic: “Thousands of people die every year of cold, so if we had global warming it would save lives,” he told a group of Californians in 2009.) In the view of one Pentagon watcher, the problem is not just that deniers like Hunter don’t see the need for icebreakers, “they don’t see the need for any kind of strategic thinking about the Arctic at all.” Without active icebreakers, California Rep. John Garamendi, the ranking Democrat on Hunter’s subcommittee, told the Associated Press that “the control of the Arctic is in the hands of Russia.”

The other issue is the lawlessness of the new ocean, especially when it comes to oil and gas exploration under the retreating ice. Every nation enjoys sovereign rights 200 miles off its coastline – but what about beyond that? How should it be divvied up? In 2010, a Chinese admiral claimed that since China has 20 percent of the world’s population, it should have 20 percent of the Arctic’s resources. Fair or not, that is surely not a view that Russia – or the United States, for that matter – is likely to endorse.

To resolve these sorts of claims, as well as to give legal structure to the rights and responsibilities of countries with respect to the oceans, United Nations members spent decades negotiating an agreement, formally known as the United Nations Convention on Law of the Sea. Among other things, UNCLOS recognizes that nations have a right to claim resources along what is known as their “extended continental shelf,” which basically means any recognizable land features that extend underwater beyond the 200-mile border. The agreement was finalized in 1982

and now has been agreed to by more than 60 countries, including Russia and every other Arctic nation – except the U.S. Although the agreement is widely supported by Big Oil, U.S. military leaders and every American president since Ronald Reagan, opponents like Sen. Inhofe, dean of the congressional climate deniers, and Ohio Rep. Jim Jordan have been able to block U.S. participation by claiming the agreement infringes on American freedom and that royalty provisions in the agreement would allow a corrupt “U.N.-style bureaucracy” to divert billions of dollars from the U.S. economy by “taxing” corporate profits.

The resources that the U.S. could justifiably claim if it recognized the Law of the Sea are vast. In Alaska alone, the continental shelf extends 600 miles from the coast, with an estimated 73 billion barrels of oil and oil-equivalent natural gas. Supporters of the agreement estimate these resources could generate more than \$193 billion in federal, state and local revenue over a 50-year period.

Setting aside the economic consequences, from a national-security perspective, it’s foolish to exempt ourselves from the one international agreement that can resolve disputes over territorial claims before they escalate. “I believe our being in the treaty would make for greater stability and security, and not just in the Arctic,” Roughhead argues. “It will also allow our claims to the extended continental shelf to be recognized internationally.” As for the argument advanced by Inhofe and others that by joining the treaty we would weaken the powers of the U.S. Navy and Coast Guard and turn authority over to the United Nations, Roughhead is immediately dismissive: “That is simply not the case.”

**A**S THE WORLD WARMS, THE U.S. military will inevitably be called upon to conduct more disaster relief and humanitarian-aid missions. The U.S. military, of course, is not a polar-bear rescue operation. “The military has many important roles,” says Sharon Burke, a former assistant secretary of defense. “But the main job is to fight wars. That means breaking things and killing people.” But the military also prides itself on its practical-mindedness, both in times of war and of peace. Military leaders embraced desegregation long before the rest of the nation, in part because they wanted the best people they could find, no matter what color. “It’s our job to deal with the world as it is, not as we wish it could be,” says Rob-

ert Freeman, a meteorologist and member of the Navy’s climate-change task force.

Adm. Samuel Locklear III, who is in charge of all U.S. armed forces in the Pacific, is one of the most respected men in the U.S. military – and the one with the toughest job, with both China and North Korea to watch over. “The political and social upheaval we’re likely to see from our rapidly warming planet,” Locklear told *The Boston Globe* in 2013, “is probably the most likely thing that... will cripple the securi-



### Unfriendly Climate

Sen. James Inhofe grilling Adm. Samuel Locklear III (above). Below: Once a leading voice on the climate, Sen. John McCain, chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee, now rarely mentions the issue.



ty environment, probably more likely than the other scenarios we all often talk about.”

Soon afterward, Locklear was summoned before the Senate Armed Services Committee, where Inhofe asked him to “clarify” his remarks. And he did, calmly and forcefully, schooling the senator in how steadily increasing populations in Asia would only put more people at risk from storms and other climate-related disasters. “OK, I’m going to start to interrupt you here,” Inhofe said, realizing it was a losing battle. He quickly changed the subject.

What Locklear correctly foresees is that a world of climate-driven chaos is already upon us, and it’s only going to get worse.

And we need to start talking about it now, because not only will the threats multiply, so will the questions we have to address. It’s one thing to plan for the invasion of Normandy Beach or the siege of Fallujah – it’s quite another to plan for being the rescue squad for the entire planet. We have already spent more than \$1 trillion in Iraq and Afghanistan, with no measurable success. How much more can we afford to do? “I think we have to make some strategic choices,” says Roughhead.

“Which parts of the world do we care about most? What are the strategic flashpoints? Do we want to be able to operate in the Arctic or not? What kind of world are we preparing for?” Some intelligence analysts argue that U.S. military superiority will be the least significant asset in the future because no one will attack us with massive conventional force. Instead, we will be pulled deeper and deeper into smaller conflicts driven by terrorism, failed states and natural disasters. “When oceans rise, instability follows,” says Secretary of the Navy Ray Mabus.

Ashton Carter, Obama’s pick for secretary of defense, is not known to Pentagon insiders for his focus on the threats of climate change.

And the chances of any significant action in Congress before 2016 are close to zero. But as chaos rises, it is inevitable that we will ask our military to do more. At some point, climate denialism will flip into climate panic, and the demand for law and order and stability will prevail (as will the calls for quick and dangerous technofixes like geo-engineering to cool down the planet and stop the rising seas). As one military analyst has pointed out, the U.S. military is the only force on Earth with the ability to police, process, house, feed and move refugees on a mass scale. But you can see how this picture could turn dark fast – one of the biggest long-term threats climate change poses could be to civil liberties and freedom. “It’s not a question of what the military can do for climate change,” says one former Pentagon official. “It’s what climate change will do to the military and its mission.” It’s a scary notion, but that’s where we are headed. In the end, it doesn’t matter how many climate-adaptation road maps the Pentagon puts out. We are now committed to a future of disorder and conflict – one in which today’s emergencies will always interrupt tomorrow’s plans.

One White House staffer recalls walking into the Pentagon office of an Army general not long ago. “I’d like to talk to you about climate change,” the staffer told him. The general didn’t even bother to look up. “I’d like to,” he said. “But I have to write a letter to a family whose son has died.”





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# Reviews

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## Imagine Dragons' Rock Inferno



The radio kings' second album is full of angsty rage, but there's more smoke than fire



### Imagine Dragons

*Smoke + Mirrors*

Interscope/Kidinakorner

★★

BY JON DOLAN

Let's give Imagine Dragons credit where it's due. On their multiplatinum 2012 debut, *Night Visions*, the Las Vegas act found a way to reheat old-fashioned arena-rock catharsis for the segmented pop world of the 2010s — fusing Coldplay's heart-hugging balladry, Arcade Fire's darkly heroic surge, neon Killers synths and elements of hip-hop, folk and EDM into something new. Their biggest hit, "Radioactive," was a dour moaner that sounded like Chris Martin trying to write an Eminem ballad about the end of the world. In concert, they hammered away at massive drums, an annoying theatrical gambit that might be a portent of where mainstream "rock" is heading. Every time a Dragon bangs a floor tom, a member of Nickelback sheds a tear.

But being mildly inventive isn't the same as being good, and Imagine Dragons hone all that eclectic energy into dreary anthems that aren't much better than the flaming turds Creed used to light up on our collective doorstep back in the Nineties. *Smoke + Mirrors* builds on its predecessor's multifaceted bombast. Like *Night Visions*, it's overseen by producer Alex Da Kid, who usually works with stars like Rihanna and Nicki

PHOTOGRAPHS IN ILLUSTRATION, CLOCKWISE FROM TOP: KEVIN WINTER/GETTY IMAGES; 2. ANGELO MERENDINO/GETTY IMAGES; TIM MOSENFELDER/GETTY IMAGES



Minaj. Throughout the album, the genre mash-ups come fast and furious – from the New Wave-tinged dance-rock of “Shots” to “Friction,” a whirl of Eastern strings, art-metal yammering, R&B Auto-Tune and electronic knock-hockey. There are moments of lithe prettiness like “Summer” and descents into desolation like the goth slog “Dream.” There’s even straight-up rock on the Black Keys-indebted garage-blues grinder “I’m So Sorry.”

All this finds a focal point in singer Dan Reynolds, a 27-year-old family man with a sad, stout heart the size of Utah. Success hasn’t done much to pick up his afflicted mood. “Who can you trust when everything you touch turns to gold?” he sings over the glowering synths and grim drums of “Gold,” sounding a little like Drake’s pale shadow. “It Comes Back to You” has a pleasantly skipping tune with a Talking Heads guitar line that suggests sunny vibes – but nope: Instead he finds himself pondering “all the things that I could be/I think I learned in therapy.”

Reynolds’ background as a practicing Mormon plays a big role in his music. He never goes Full Jesus, but spiritual overtones come through all over the place as he lunges through the darkness in search of redemption. On the title track, Edge-y guitars shimmer and strings slam as he entreats “I wanna believe” to an unspecified “dream-maker/life-taker.”

The combination of self-pity, grandiosity and leaden spirituality can get trying. And all those attempts at musical worldliness can feel like stylistic tourism. “I’ve told a million lies, but now I’ll tell a single truth,” Reynolds sings on “I Bet My Life,” a gospel-sampling, foot-stomping anthem that serves as the album’s 72-ounce Big Gulp of arms-aloft hope-folk. He wants so badly to travel the righteous path, and his soul may one day bask in the glow of eternal wisdom. But his music has a long way to go.

**LISTEN NOW!**  
Hear key tracks from these albums at [RollingStone.com/albums](http://RollingStone.com/albums).

## SINGLES



A modest proposal:  
Brock

### Modest Mouse “The Best Room” ★★★★★½

Eight years have passed since Modest Mouse’s last LP, and if the urgency and absurdity of the Pacific Northwest crew’s new single is any indication, frontman Isaac Brock must be crawling out of his skin. It’s a frenetic onslaught of paranoia, silliness, elastic rhythms and swirling guitars – all of which adds up to classic Modest Mouse. “Ain’t it hard feeling tired all the time?” Brock sings, capturing both his restless state of mind and the feeling you get from listening to him zip through his every worry like a broken carnival ride.

KORY GROW



Gibbard

### Death Cab for Cutie “Black Sun” ★★★★★

Death Cab’s new album will be their first since founding member Chris Walla split – and since Ben Gibbard divorced Zooey Deschanel. When Gibbard sings, “There’s a dumpster in the driveway of all the plans that came undone,” the sadness is real. And when defiant guitar snarls cut in, you can feel him shaking off the pain and the band remaking itself.

JON DOLAN

### Alex G “Sarah” ★★★★★

“I’ll make promises that plague Sarah’s heart/So I can watch her fall apart,” indie wunderkind Alex G sings. On this bedroom-pop nugget (written a few years ago, before his Internet-driven career took off), he turns passive-aggressive, warbling into bright, blurry poetry anyone could love – except maybe poor Sarah.

J.D.

### Laura Marling “False Hope” ★★★★★

Marling paints a bleak picture: Women go crazy, neighbors beg for help, and animals are dying – it’s like a folk-rock *Walking Dead*, right down to the chilling strings. But even if the world’s ending, Marling can take comfort in the fact that she’s got the sweetest singing voice in the whole apocalypse.

K.G.

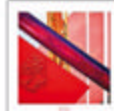
### Redfoo “Juicy Wiggle” ★★★★★½

Some cite LMFAO’s novelty hits as everything that’s wrong with today’s music. “Juicy Wiggle” (from the group’s Redfoo) makes the case that pop has been shamelessly silly all along, attempting an unlikely fusion of contemporary EDM and Fifties rock. This is how the hop would have sounded if your grandma knew about Jell-O shots.

NICK MURRAY



Redfoo



### Lupe Fiasco

*Tetsuo & Youth* 1st & 15th/Atlantic

★★★★

Chicago rapper spits brainteaser lyrics over ambitious backdrops

Spending too much time decoding this 78-minute behemoth might break your brain. Lupe Fiasco’s fifth album is a swirl of double meanings, extended metaphors about yoga and math, and increasingly labyrinthine ways to say “I’m dope” (“Nerd gang, make Mandelbrot sets when we hand-shake”). Even on its surface, though, it’s the meatiest set he’s produced in years. Kicking and pushing against the rap status quo, he raps over French jazz funk, pens a two-part suite about the prison-industrial complex, inserts contemporary classical-string interludes and curates a nine-minute gangsta-rap-posse cut featuring the “realist people” he knows.

CHRISTOPHER R. WEINGARTEN



### George Ezra

*Wanted on Voyage* Columbia

★★★★½

A rising U.K. star makes old sounds feel new on his debut

A chart-topping smash in the U.K., this English singer-songwriter’s debut LP is a post-Spotify wonder, triangulating herky-jerky indie rock, the rustic strum of Lumineers-style folk and the blue-eyed R&B of his tourmate Sam Smith. George Ezra’s sound is omnivorous, and his swagger is decidedly modern, but the 21-year-old star has the deep and smoky voice of an old train-hopping troubadour. A fan of Woody Guthrie and Lead Belly, he writes simple lyrics that could exist comfortably in any era: “I’ve been told your new playmate’s successful, and he’s handsome, and he’s charming/It’s a damn good job he isn’t here, or I may have wound up harming your darling,” he sings on “Leaving It Up to You.”

CHRISTOPHER R. WEINGARTEN



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## Aphex Twin

*Computer Controlled Instruments Pt2 EP* Warp

★★★★½

Mysterious electronic god keeps fans guessing with a trippy EP

Richard D. James, EDM's deadbeat dad, returned after 13 years of silence last year with the masterful *Syro*. This surprise EP – along with hours of other music that he appears to be posting to Soundcloud lately – suggests that there's plenty more left on his fabled hard drive. (Maybe there's even a *Pt1* somewhere.) Among 13 tracks that plunk down somewhere between John Cage's prepared piano compositions and a Martian breakbeats record, the adroit android thump of “diskhat ALL prepared-1mixed 13” and the contemplative “DISKPREPT1” show the maestro finely mincing live drums and instruments into a sweet treat.

ANDY BETA



## Mourn

*Mourn* Captured Tracks

★★★★½

Barcelona teens make a dark, bracing alt-rock debut

The first album by this very young quartet from Barcelona is what folks used to mean by alternative rock: a genuinely contrary fury of jagged-granite guitars and severe pop discipline. Mourn's grip and immediacy in “Dark Issues,” “Misery Factory” and “Marshall” (the chorus: “Shut up, Marshall!”) are especially remarkable as singer-guitarists Jazz Rodríguez Bueno and Carla Pérez Vas were born in 1996, four years after the release of PJ Harvey's *Dry*, a clear inspiration. Bueno and Vas spice their grind with wicked teenage spite: A bonus track, the first song they wrote, is called “Boys Are Cunts.” But armed with this sound, Mourn will get even more interesting as they tackle what happens after adolescence.

DAVID FRICKE

## BOOKS



Gordon in 1991

# A Life Spent on the Cutting Edge

Sonic Youth's Kim Gordon looks back on her adventures in art, rock and heartbreak

## Girl in a Band: A Memoir

Kim Gordon Dey Street ★★★★★



“Marriage is a long conversation, someone once said, and maybe so is a rock band's life,” Kim Gordon, the former singer-bassist-guitarist in Sonic Youth, writes in *Girl in a Band*. “A few minutes later, both were done.” It is a deceptively crisp summation of the twin blows that inevitably open Gordon's autobiography: the announcement in 2011 of the end of her marriage to Sonic Youth guitarist

Thurston Moore and the shutdown of the landmark post-punk band they founded in New York with guitarist Lee Ranaldo 30 years earlier. The introduction is, in fact, a detailed, heart-sinking account of Sonic Youth's final tour, in South America, right down to the suffocating pretense of normality in the catering room as Gordon and Moore, already split, wait to go onstage. Romances and bands blow up all the time in rock-star memoirs; they rarely end at the same time, to such gripping effect.

Gordon returns to the collapse of her marriage at the end of *Girl in a Band*. But the revelatory heart of the book is what happens in between, especially on the way to New York. Except for a couple of obscure false starts, Sonic Youth were Gordon's first real band. She was in her late twenties when she met Moore in the inspirational afterburn of the city's No Wave scene. “Extremely shy and sensitive” as a child, she grew up in Southern California, in a Sixties lined with darkness: her older brother's descent into schizophrenia. Gordon found relief in experimental art, and her drive and relationships in that community would be important factors in Sonic Youth's avant-crossover success. She had early interesting musical friends (future film composer Danny Elfman, Neil Young roadie Bruce Berry). But Gordon is blunt about her uphill battles as a punk-forged feminist in a boys-with-guitars culture, even during the indie-rock boom. “Did the 1990s ever exist?” Gordon asks, exasperated, at one point. Yes, they did. This is what she saw and won – then lost.

DAVID FRICKE



## Estelle

*True Romance*

Established 1980, Inc./BMG

★★★★

British soul singer turns in a lush concept LP of love songs

In 2008 – the same year another one-name British soul-pop singer called Adele arrived – Estelle made her own splash with “American Boy.” Although her fourth LP lacks a killer Kanye collaboration like that one, she doesn't need it. Tracing the stages of a relationship, the album is split into themes including courage, passion and (of course) true romance. It's a loose concept, but it delivers: “Something Good” keeps the Nineties-house revival pumping, while “Silly Girls” is Seventies slow-jam sumptuousness. Even better is “All That Matters” – a love letter to Dionne Warwick's Bacharach-David days that gives this album a fairy-tale ending.

CHUCK ARNOLD



## Dan Deacon

*Gliss Riffer* Domino

★★★★

An experimental EDM guy who's got a wry sense of fun

Bearded roly-poly Baltimore EDM dude Dan Deacon looks a little like a highly intelligent teddy bear – a perfect fit for his playful, complex music. Deacon's previous works have included the high-octane 2007 album *Spiderman of the Rings* and a mischievous remix of Miley Cyrus' “We Can't Stop.” His latest features his own zonked singing on tracks like the loopy, Tom Petty-referencing elegy “Feel the Lightning” and the head-spinning backwoods goof “When I Was Done Dying.” Deacon loves sweeping orchestrations, too – see his 2012 album *America* – and you can hear that side come out on “Take It to the Max,” eight cascading minutes of keyboard mania that more than lives up to its title.

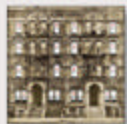
JON DOLAN



# Zeppelin's Final Peak

**Led Zeppelin** *Physical Graffiti: Deluxe Edition*

Atlantic/Swan Song ★★★★★

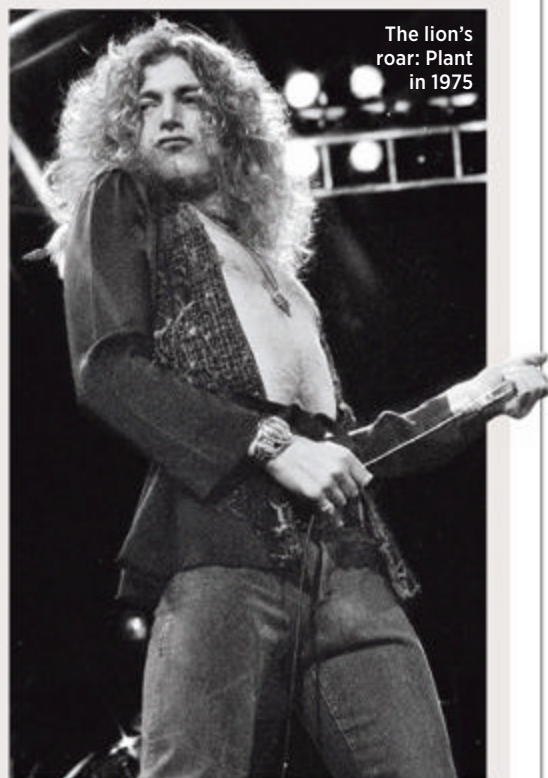


"Changes fill my time," Robert Plant sings on the extended country-soul drama "Ten Years Gone." It was a fitting sentiment. Led Zeppelin's relentless, searching bravado across their first five albums – out of Delta and Memphis fundamentals through psychedelia, Welsh-country romanticism and North African fantasia – climaxed at the twin peaks of this 1975 double-LP set. *Physical Graffiti* was a deluxe edition in itself: eight epic-length tracks from sessions in the winter of 1974, fortified with outtakes going back to 1970. The effect was a dynamic, integrated mural of roots, textural leap and pilgrims' memoir – the most complete record Zeppelin ever made. The next one, 1976's *Presence*, was pure frenzy, produced in deliberate haste; 1979's *In Through the Out Door* was unfinished rebirth. *Physical Graffiti*, in its cocksure energies and determined reach, was Zeppelin's last, swaggering masterpiece.

Plant and guitarist-producer Jimmy Page were Zeppelin's travelers, imprinting their passages through India, Morocco and Egypt on the monumental ascension of "Kashmir," the long prayer-call entrance to "In the Light" and the raga-inflected skid of Page's slide guitar in the thundering prewar blues "In My Time of Dying." Bassist John Paul Jones and drummer John Bonham were instigating drivers too. Jones, on clavinet, is a hyperfunk rhythm section unto himself in "Trampled Under Foot." Bonham rightly got a co-writer's credit for "Kashmir"; his caravan march, exploding in cannon-fire rolls, wreathed in Jones' sandstorm orchestration, is a large part of the hypnosis.

The bonus disc here has a low ratio of surprises, considering the album's original risk and bounty. But there are two of note: a rough mix of "Houses of the Holy" that vibrates with Jones' thumping bass; and an early sketch of "In the Light" with an intimacy rare for Zeppelin, in any year.

DAVID FRICKE



The lion's roar: Plant in 1975







## Kate Pierson

*Guitars and Microphones*

Lazy Meadow/Kobalt

★★★

**B-52s singer gets empowered on Sia-produced solo debut**

Kate Pierson has defined the eccentric soul of the B-52s for more than three decades. Now the feisty Jersey girl has a private Idaho of her own. Executive-produced by Sia, Pierson's solo debut is a collection of brassy manifestoes about independence and, naturally, outer space. The best intergalactic jams ("Time Wave Zero," "Bottoms Up") were co-written by Strokes guitarist Nick Valensi. While Pierson doesn't roam too far from the B-52s mother ship, she does leave the surf guitars behind — except on the New Wave-y single "Mister Sister," an LGBT-rights anthem that Cyndi Lauper probably wishes she wrote.

SARAH GRANT



## Jorma Kaukonen

*Ain't in No Hurry* Red House

★★★

**A Jefferson Airplane pilot chills with pals on an acoustic set**

Once a pioneer of San Francisco psychedelia, Jorma Kaukonen is a bona fide graybeard folk swami at age 74. His latest LP is all austere, unplugged displays of the Piedmont finger style that's been his signature since his 1966 Jefferson Airplane showpiece "Embryonic Journey." There are covers and originals: "The Terrible Operation" is a randy 1930s blues number that recalls Hot Tuna's "Keep on Truckin'"; longtime wingman Jack Casady adds bass on "Bar Room Crystal Ball," a gentle jammer spangled with Larry Campbell's iridescent pedal steel. And Jorma? He mostly lays back, a master in situ, unfurling melodies and savoring every note. WILL HERMES



## Screaming Females

*Rose Mountain* Don Giovanni

★★★

**New Jersey trio take listeners on a rock & roller-coaster ride**

Screaming Females started from the bottom of a New Jersey basement, but it wasn't long before they were big enough to tour with bands like Against Me! and Garbage. The trio's sixth album is a rocker's delight, reviving the signature sludge of the Nineties on "Empty Head," hightailing into thrash territory for "Ripe" and easing into groovy prog splendor on "Burning Car." Boasting no-frills production by Matt Bayles (Pearl Jam, Mastodon), the album runs like a souped-up, punked-out station wagon, high on the fumes of nostalgia. As always, frontwoman Marissa Paternoster's winding guitar solos and dogged vibrato vocals steal the show. SUZY EXPOSITO



## Gang of Four

*What Happens Next*

Metropolis ★

**Post-punk heroes' radical attack curdles into vague paranoia**

At their peak, Gang of Four stylized 1970s dissent into cutting post-punk. Sadly, the qualities that once made the English act so influential are gone on its ninth LP, and first since co-founding singer Jon King's departure. The question posed by the record's title is not one the band seems to know how to answer. In place of once-sharp radical jabs, we get empty alarmism. "Obey the Ghost" is full of vague Illuminati archetypes: "We're Facebook friends with celebrities," new singer John "Gaoler" Sterry accuses over ominous video-game chirps. The only threat it brings to mind is that Frogger might not cross the street in time. AMY ROSE SPIEGEL

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**RUN, BIRDMAN, RUN**  
Michael Keaton takes the lead in the Oscar derby.

# Race for the Oscar

## BEST PICTURE

- ▶ *American Sniper*
- ▶ *Birdman*
- ▶ *Boyhood*
- ▶ *The Grand Budapest Hotel*
- ▶ *The Imitation Game*
- ▶ *Selma*
- ▶ *The Theory of Everything*
- ▶ *Whiplash*

**NARROWING THE FIELD** Why am I calling this year's Oscars, on February 22nd, the "Caucasian Consensus," when *Selma* is one of the eight nominees for Best Picture? Because that landmark film about Martin Luther King Jr.'s 1965 civil-rights march has only one other nomination, for Best Song. Not one person of color appears among the 20 nominees for acting. Apparently, the Academy thought it gave last year when it awarded *12 Years a Slave* the gold. The message from white voters? Don't get uppity. So scratch *Selma* and the other three Best Picture nominees whose directors didn't make the cut. That's you, *American Sniper*, *The Theory of Everything* and

A boy child? A gay icon? A movie star who thinks he's a bird? Here's your tip sheet for the whitest Oscars in years

BY PETER TRAVERS



**PLACE YOUR BETS** Can *Boyhood* (left, with Ellar Coltrane) and *The Imitation Game* (with Benedict Cumberbatch) take down *Birdman*?

*Whiplash*. OK, *Sniper* boasts a box office (\$250 million and climbing) that pulverizes the presumptive favorite, *Boyhood* (\$25 million), and its other rivals. But Michael Moore and a fat chunk of liberal Hollywood don't cotton to a film that, they think, celebrates a Navy SEAL

for a record 160 kills in Iraq. Nonetheless, *American Sniper* is clearly the people's choice in this race. But please remember, the 6,000 or so Academy voters aren't people. They're industry types invested in using the Oscars to reflect a pumped-up and pompous image of them-

selves to the globe. That's why comedies rarely win Best Picture. Bad news for *The Grand Budapest Hotel*. Despite tying *Birdman* for the most nominations (nine), *Hotel* will have to settle for a congeniality prize. But, hey, isn't *Birdman* a comedy? Yeah, but it's edged with disillusion, despair and suicide. That, Hollywood can relate to. **SNUBS** Since 2009, the Academy has allowed itself up to 10 nominees for Best Picture. And yet this year, it chose only eight, suggesting a thin field. Really! *Foxcatcher* is nominated for acting, directing and writing, but it's not worthy of Best Picture? Indelible indies such as *Under the Skin*, *Nightcrawler*, *Snowpiercer*, *Locke*, *Mr. Turner*, *A Most Violent Year* and *Dear White People* got shafted, along with studio releases of fierce intelligence (*Interstellar*, *Inherent Vice*, *Gone Girl*). **SURPRISES** In the race between *Boyhood* and *Birdman*, I see only one dark horse in the bunch. That would be *The Imitation Game*, nominated in all the right categories (picture, director, writer, actor, supporting actress and editor). More

crucially, Harvey Weinstein has put all his company's marketing weight into turning an Academy vote for *The Imitation Game* into a vote for Alan Turing, the computer pioneer and gay martyr played by Benedict Cumberbatch. Gay leaders and technocrats are featured in the ads. Google chairman Eric Schmidt is quoted as saying, "Every time you use a phone or a computer, you use the ideas that Alan Turing invented." Too much? Weinstein knows the Oscar game better than anyone, bringing home *The King's Speech* over *The Social Network* in 2011 and *The Artist* over *The Descendants* the following year. Never discount the Harvey factor.

**SHOULD WIN** *Boyhood*. Richard Linklater filmed this story of a Texas boy (Ellar Coltrane) growing up over 12 years, from six to 18, with the same cast and the same artistry. The naysayers claim it's a gimmick. They're wrong. It's a classic.

**WILL WIN** The signs point to *Birdman*. The Producers Guild and the Screen Actors Guild put it on top. Director Alejandro G. Iñárritu's tale of a washed-up actor (Michael Keaton) making a comeback explodes with creativity. The naysayers claim it's style over substance. They're wrong. It's a classic. But *Boyhood* has my heart, for keeps.

## BEST ACTOR

- ▶ **Steve Carell** *Foxcatcher*
- ▶ **Bradley Cooper** *American Sniper*
- ▶ **Benedict Cumberbatch** *The Imitation Game*
- ▶ **Michael Keaton** *Birdman*
- ▶ **Eddie Redmayne** *The Theory of Everything*

**NARROWING THE FIELD** Not a loser in the bunch. Carell totally transformed himself to play a monster of privilege. And Cooper inhabited the body and soul of traumatized Navy SEAL Chris Kyle. But it's not their year. This is a three-way race that pits two British thespians playing real people – Redmayne as Stephen Hawking, the theoretical physicist robbed of movement and speech by ALS; and Cumberbatch as Alan Turing, a math genius

# THE CONTENDERS

## FAVORITE



Michael Keaton

## BEST ACTOR



Julianne Moore

## BEST ACTRESS



Eddie Redmayne

## DARK HORSE



J.K. Simmons

## BEST SUPPORTING ACTOR

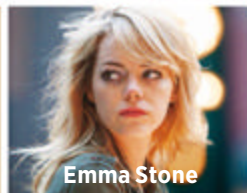


Edward Norton



Patricia Arquette

## BEST SUPPORTING ACTRESS



Emma Stone

persecuted for the then-crime of homosexuality – against an American actor, Michael Keaton, playing a Hollywood star making a comeback, which many see as him playing a fictional version of himself.

**SNUBS** Here are five who've got as much game as the real nominees. David Oyelowo is electric as Martin Luther King in *Selma* – oh, wait, he's black. There's Jake Gyllenhaal as a new kind of media creature in *Nightcrawler*, Timothy Spall as an artist unbound in *Mr. Turner* and Tom Hardy in a tour de force as a man alone in a car in *Locke*. And Chadwick Boseman soars as James Brown in *Get On Up*. Oh, wait, he's black.

**SURPRISES** The popularity of Cumberbatch (go, Sherlock!) cannot be underestimated. In a battle between Redmayne and Keaton, he could be the spoiler. **SHOULD WIN** Redmayne has detractors who feel that Daniel Day-Lewis did the disability thing better in *My Left Foot*. Others feel Redmayne will be hurt by being seen in a bad

movie, *Jupiter Ascending*, during the voting. I feel his *Theory* performance is magnificent in every detail. That should count.

**WILL WIN** Keaton. Come on, people. This dude's been the shit for years. *Beetlejuice*, *Batman*, you name it. And no Academy love. Not even a nomination. In *Birdman*, he has the role of his career and crushes it. How do you resist? You don't.

## BEST ACTRESS

- ▶ **Marion Cotillard** *Two Days, One Night*
- ▶ **Felicity Jones** *The Theory of Everything*
- ▶ **Julianne Moore** *Still Alice*
- ▶ **Rosamund Pike** *Gone Girl*
- ▶ **Reese Witherspoon** *Wild*

**NARROWING THE FIELD** That's easy. Everyone but Moore can go home. It's not that her fellow nominees are coasting. I thought Pike acted the hell out of her role as Ben Affleck's wifey nemesis, but the Academy clearly wants David Finch-

er's *Gone Girl* gone. And Jones? She'll grab the gold some day, just as Cotillard and Witherspoon did before her. Not now. **SNUBS** Everyone's bitching about the diss to Jennifer Aniston in *Cake*. Agreed. But I'm pissed about freezing out Scarlett Johansson for *Under the Skin*. Or what about Gugu Mbatha-Raw in *Beyond the Lights*? Oh, wait, she's black.

**SURPRISES** They nominated Cotillard in a French-language film, so they must really, really like her. But that much? Nah.

**SHOULD AND WILL WIN** Moore. Sure, she's overdue (four nominations and no wins). She's also touching and vital as a Columbia professor exhibiting signs of early-onset Alzheimer's.

## BEST SUPPORTING ACTOR

- ▶ **Robert Duvall** *The Judge*
- ▶ **Ethan Hawke** *Boyhood*
- ▶ **Edward Norton** *Birdman*
- ▶ **Mark Ruffalo** *Foxcatcher*
- ▶ **J.K. Simmons** *Whiplash*

**NARROWING THE FIELD** Place your bets on Simmons. All respect to Duvall, Hawke, Norton and Ruffalo, but if you think Simmons isn't a sure-as-shit shoo-in as a drum instructor from jazz hell, then you're not on my effing tempo.

**SNUBS** Duvall is stuck in a crap movie, so I'd trade him for Josh Brolin (*Inherent Vice*), or Riz Ahmed (*Nightcrawler*), or Tyler Perry (*Gone Girl*), proving he can act when not in Madea drag. Oh, wait, he's black.

**SURPRISES** Norton is as good as it gets as an actor who can't live outside his own head, but a surprise is not gonna happen. **SHOULD AND WILL WIN** Simmons. Beat the drum, baby.

## BEST SUPPORTING ACTRESS

- ▶ **Patricia Arquette** *Boyhood*
- ▶ **Laura Dern** *Wild*
- ▶ **Keira Knightley** *The Imitation Game*
- ▶ **Emma Stone** *Birdman*
- ▶ **Meryl Streep** *Into the Woods*

**NARROWING THE FIELD** Arquette has won every award minted or printed for her poignant performance as the



mother of the boy in *Boyhood*. Why should that stop now?

**SNUBS** How do you ignore Tilda Swinton (*Snowpiercer*) or Rene Russo (*Nightcrawler*) or Kim Dickens and Carrie Coon (*Gone Girl*)? Did Streep really need her 900th nomination? What about Carmen Ejogo, superb as Coretta Scott King in *Selma*? Oh, wait, she's black.

**SURPRISES** It's a kick to see Stone dig into a role worthy of her talent. She'll get more.

**SHOULD AND WILL WIN** Arquette. She's shattering in the scene where she sends her son off to college. 'Nuff said.

## BEST DIRECTOR

- **Wes Anderson**  
The Grand Budapest Hotel
- **Alejandro G. Iñárritu**  
Birdman
- **Richard Linklater** Boyhood
- **Bennett Miller** Foxcatcher
- **Morten Tyldum**  
The Imitation Game

**NARROWING THE FIELD** Just like the Best Picture race, it's between *Boyhood* and *Birdman*. That means Linklater, in his most personal film, takes on Iñárritu in his. In the past three years, Best Picture and Director have not matched up. It might happen again. Yikes!

**SNUBS** By now, you know I'm going to say Ava DuVernay, who by any standard of quality measurement should be there for *Selma*. Oh, wait, she's black.

**SURPRISES** If anyone but Linklater or Iñárritu wins.

**SHOULD WIN** Linklater. I've made my case.

**WILL WIN** Iñárritu. Maybe because *Birdman* has more bells and whistles. Or maybe not.

## BEST SONG

- **Everything Is Awesome**  
The Lego Movie
- **Glory** Selma
- **Grateful** Beyond the Lights
- **I'm Not Gonna Miss You**  
Glen Campbell...I'll Be Me
- **Lost Stars** Begin Again

**SHOULD AND WILL WIN** "Glory," by John Legend and Common, has entered the Hot 100. It brings the soul of *Selma* home. Its message is vital. Its creators are black. And it's time.

# New Stars at Sundance

**Youth, raunch, film nerds and big sales for quirky indies bring the heat to the wintry Utah film festival** By Peter Travers

## We're Geeks! Show Us the Money!

After a few stagnant years when films from unknowns sold for little or not at all, Sundance came back with a bang in 2015. *Me and Earl and the Dying Girl*, a movie about...well, check the title, sold for \$12 million and swept both the Grand Jury and Audience awards. Vibrantly directed by Alfonso Gomez-Rejon, the film shows us two teens, Greg (Thomas Mann, a real find) and Earl (a stellar RJ Cyler), who geek out making film parodies with titles like *A Sockwork Orange* and *Senior Citizen Kane*. Jesse Andrews' script, from his own novel, edges toward *Fault in Our Stars* tear-jerking when Greg's mom (Connie Britton) persuades him to spend time with Rachel (Olivia Cooke), a classmate with leukemia. But, damn, *Me and Earl* is too edgy and killer-funny for that. The geeks also rule *The Wolfpack*, which took the Grand Jury prize for documentary, about a family of six siblings whose parents keep them inside. All they know about the outside world comes from movies. Crystal Moselle's potent debut doc is like nothing you've ever seen. And I mean that as high praise.

## Faces You Won't Forget

Let's start with Bel Powley. Just 22, this theater-trained Brit blew audiences away with her dynamite performance in *The Diary of a Teenage Girl*. She plays Minnie Goetz, a 15-year-old who loses her virginity to her mother's lover. Mom is played by Kristen Wiig, and the aging boy toy is Alexander Skarsgard, but it's Powley who grabs you from her first American-accented line: "I've just had sex - holy shit!" Based on Phoebe Gloeckner's autobiographical novel set in San Francisco in 1976, the film, interspersed

with clever animation inspired by Minnie's drawings, makes a striking feature debut for Marielle Heller. But it's Powley who can make you laugh and break your heart at the same time. You'll also find future stars in Rick Famuyiwa's bracing *Dope*, a kind of *Breakfast Club* for black Angelenos. Shameik Moore is all kinds of terrific as Malcolm, who leads his pals Jib (Tony Revolori) and Diggy (Kiersey Clemons) in whooping it up for "white stuff" like BMX biking, studying for SATs and Nineties hip-hop. The cool kids hate them, naturally. It's irresistible, freewheeling fun.

## Sex Is Everywhere

You find it in the strangest places. Melissa Rauch, of *The Big Bang Theory*, has a sex bout with Sebastian Stan - they play Olympic gymnasts - that will make you doubt your vision in *The Bronze*. That's nothing compared to what Jack Black does to James Marsden in *The D Train*. But it's all for laughs. A seriously dramatic and soulful Sarah Silverman takes adultery more seriously in *I Smile Back*. And the doc *Hot Girls Wanted*, co-produced by Rashida Jones, opens your eyes to the porn industry in ways that will leave you shaken.

## The Best of the Best

In a solid Sundance year, I felt charged by the mesmerizing mind games being played in *The End of the Tour*. Full disclosure: The film is based on the 2010 book *Although of Course You End Up Becoming Yourself*, by ROLLING STONE writer David Lipsky. Since

it's basically the story of how Lipsky (played by Jesse Eisenberg) follows acclaimed *Infinite Jest* author David Foster Wallace (a stellar Jason Segel) around for five days in 1996, the movie could have, well, sucked. Instead, director James Ponsoldt, working from a script by Pulitzer Prize-winning playwright Donald Margulies, turns the give-and-take between Lipsky and a genius who would hang himself 12 years later into a comedy of shocking gravity, a meditation on life and art, shot through with ferocity and feeling. That kind of experiment is what Sundance, at its best, is all about.



**SUNDANCE KIDS** Bel Powley (top), *The Diary of a Teenage Girl*; Tony Revolori, Kiersey Clemons, Shameik Moore (from left) in *Dope*.

Actress **Nina Dobrev** (pictured) looking rockstar under the infamous low Spartan Barbed Wire.



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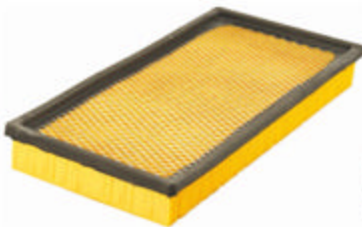
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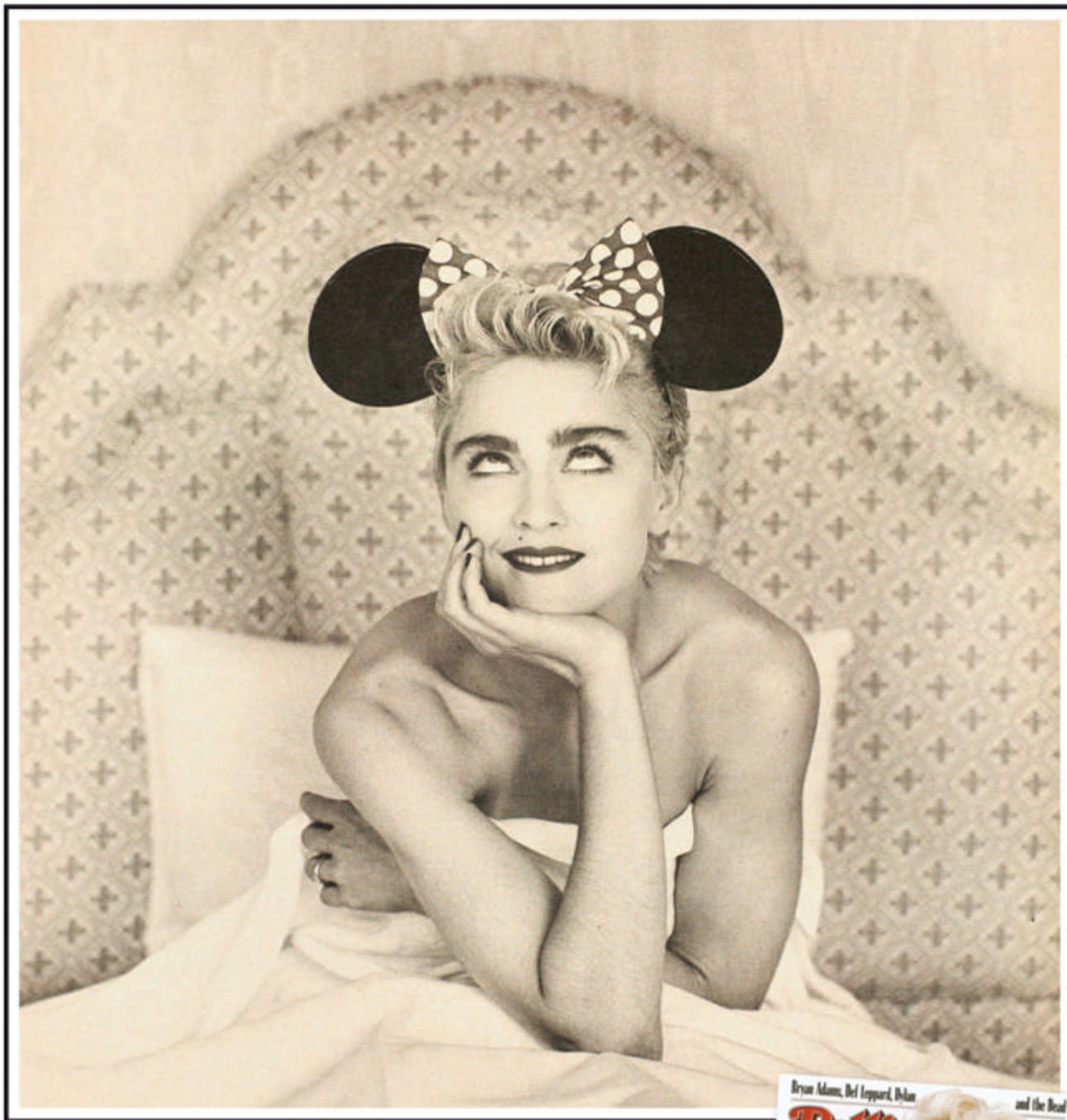
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## Madonna's Bedtime Stories

The idea for Madonna's fourth *Rolling Stone* cover was to send photographer Herb Ritts to Tokyo, where the pop star was kicking off a world tour, and follow her around the city. The problem: "She was mobbed beyond anything she had imagined," recalled photo director Laurie Kratochvil. "She couldn't leave her hotel room." Ritts wound up taking this shot in Madonna's suite at the luxury Hotel Okura. When a typhoon forced her to cancel her first Tokyo show, Mikal Gilmore ended up going to dinner with Madonna and her crew. Gilmore says that he saw an unexpected side of the star when she was approached by a sobbing fan. "The inclination at the table was to move the young woman away or to see her as silly," he says. "But Madonna was instinctively kind to her and protective. It was an unguarded moment that's stayed with me."





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